A CONTEMPORARY BALLADE

Kaija Saariaho’s Ballade for Solo Piano as a Narrative of Guilt and Trauma

Helsingin yliopisto
Humanistinen tiedekunta
Filosofian, historian, kulttuurin ja
taiteiden tutkimuksen laitos
Musiikkitiede
Pro gradu -tutkielma
Toukokuu 2018
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Tiedekunta - Fakultet - Faculty	Laitos - Institution - Department	
Humanistinen tiedekunta	Filosofian, historian, kulttuurin ja taiteiden tutkimuksen laitos	
Tekijä - Författare - Author		
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Työn nimi - Arbetets titel		
A Contemporary Ballade: Kaija Saariaho's Ballade for Solo Piano as a Narrative of Guilt and Trauma		
Title		
Oppiaine - Läroämne - Subject		
Musiikkitiede		
Työn laji/ Ohjaaja - Arbetets art/Handledare - Level/Instructor	Aika - Datum - Month and year	Sivumäärä - Sidoantal - Number of pages
Pro gradu -tutkielma/Pirkko Moisala	Toukokuu 2018	59 s + 11 liites.

Tiivistelmä - Referat – Abstract

Kaija Saariahon (s. 1952) musiikkia on tutkittu paljon, mutta hänen pianoteoksensa ovat jääneet vähemmälle huomiolle. Tässä työssä analysoidaan Kaija Saariahon (s. 1952) pianosävellystä Ballade (2005). Balladen karaktääri on dramaattinen, ja se pohjautuu laulusarja *Quatre Instantsin Douleuriin* (2002), joka käsittelee syyllisyyttä. Nämä tekijät johdattivat Balladen tulkintaan syyllisyyden ja trauman narratiivina. Analyysiin sovelletaan James Parakilasin (1992) narratiivista balladiprosessin mallia, *ombra*-topiikkia ja traumateoriaa. Balladen narratiivisuutta nykyteoksena analysoidaan Vincent Meelbergin (2006) nykymusiikille kehitetyn narratiivisen mallin avulla. Tutkimus on semioottinen ja psykoanalyyttinen, ja edistää Saariahon pienempien sävellysten ja nykymusiikin narratiivisuuden tutkimusta.

Analyysin materiaalina käytettiin *Douleurin* ja Balladen tallenteita ja nuotteja. Meelbergin mallin mukaisesti analyysi keskittyi Balladen merkittäviin muutoksiin ja toistuviin eleisiin. *Douleurin* lyriikkaa ja musiikkia sovellettiin Balladen analyysiin intertekstuaalisina esiteksteinä.

Balladen narratiivi rakentuu melodisuudesta, toistuvista eleistä ja siirtymistä polyfonisten ja homofonisten jaksojen välillä. Balladiprosessin näkökulmasta Balladen toistuvat eleet kuvaavat syyllisyyttä mieleen nousevana muistona, ja homofoniset jaksot kuvaavat sitä unenomaisena muistelemisena. Balladessa on *ombralle* ominaisia sydämenlyönnin eleitä, nopeita repetitioita, glissandoja ja tremoloja, jotka edustavat syyllisyyttä ja pelkoa. Ne voivat myös ilmentää eroottista halua, mikä heijastaa *Douleurin* lyriikan kuvaamaa ambivalenssia. Balladen äkilliset hetket ja toistuvat eleet voivat myös edustaa traumalle tyypillistä äkillistä pelkoa ja pakonomaista toistoa, ja Balladen loppua kohden lisääntyvä lineaarisuus yritystä narrativisoida trauma.

Analyysi osoittaa *Douleurin* ja Balladen läheisen yhteyden. *Douleurin* sisällyttäminen Balladen analyysiin tukee Balladen luentaa syyllisyyden ja trauman narratiivina. Syyllisyys ja trauma ilmenevät niin Balladen yksittäisissä eleissä kuin kokonaismuodossa.

Avainsanat – Nyckelord	
musiikin narratiivisuus, ballade, syyllisyys, trauma	
Keywords	
Säilytyspaikka - Förvaringsställe - Where deposited	
Helsingin yliopiston keskustakampuksen kirjasto	
Muita tietoja - Övriga uppgifter - Additional information	

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1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of my master's thesis is a narrative analysis of Kaija Saariaho's composition Ballade (2005) for solo piano. The analysis interprets Ballade as a narrative of guilt and trauma. Composer Kaija Saariaho (b. 1952) has written several chamber music works for piano, and keyboard instruments are used in many of her compositions for orchestra. There are five solo compositions for keyboard: *Jardin secret II* (1986) for harpsichord and electronics, and *Monkey Fingers, Velvet Hand* (1991), Ballade, Prélude (2007) and *Arabesques et adages* (2016) for solo piano. Saariaho's numeral works have been a subject of increased interest among music scholars, but her compositions for piano and other keyboard instruments have received less attention. Simon Emmerson (2001) has written a brief analysis of *Jardin secret II* (1986), and a brief introduction to Ballade is included in Tuomas Mali's (2009) catalogue. This analysis contributes to the study of Saariaho's more marginal instrumental works, as well as to the study of Ballades and to the narrative and psychological study of non-tonal contemporary music.

In Grove Music Online, Brown (2013) defines ballade an instrumental, normally piano, piece in a narrative style. According to James Parakilas (1992, 28), the generality of Brown's definition is due to the scarce number of Ballades that remain in standard repertory. Frédéric Chopin's (1810–1849) Ballades have been of most interest to scholars: a search at the Internet database RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale) with the words "Chopin" and "ballade" gives a total of 253 results, whereas Franz Liszt's and Johannes Brahms's ballades, other central works in the canon, result in 58 and 49 results respectively. Saariaho's Ballade, a small miniature composition of the duration of approximately 5–6 minutes, can be considered a marginal work within Saariaho's oeuvre, and ballade as a compositional genre equally marginal among contemporary composers. Saariaho is not in the habit of composing to Romantic genres, as Mali (2009, 88) notes, which renders her Ballade an even greater curiosity. Because ballade by its name refers to programmatic content, narrativity is a term associated with it (Brown 2013, Kennedy & Bourne 2015). Especially Chopin's ballades have been examined from the perspective of their narration: for example Eero Tarasti (1994) introduces a narrative grammar in his analysis of Chopin's Ballade Op. 23, Klein (2004)

has analyzed Chopin's Ballade Op. 52 as a musical narrative and Bellman (2010) approaches Chopin's Ballade Op. 38 as a representation of national martyrdom.

My analysis applies James Parakilas's general narrative model called the ballad process presented in his book *Ballads Without Words – Chopin and the Tradition of the Instrumental Ballade* (1992). The ballad process is a narrative model developed for the genre, and it bases on Chopin's Ballades. The ballad process interprets the ballade psychologically as a representation of a guilty conscience. Parakilas's model focuses on the music's overall form. In addition, some of Ballade's gestures will be analyzed with the musical topic of *ombra*, which, like the ballad process, relates to the theme of guilt, reprehensible action and punishment. I will further suggest a reading of Ballade as trauma narration. To that end, I will mostly apply Susan J. Brison's article "Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self" (1999) and Cathy Caruth's book *Unclaimed Experience* (2016). My analysis is semiotic and psychoanalytical in nature. Semiotics and psychoanalysis can be seen as closely linked; semiotic is the study of signs, and these signs can be interpreted to stand for states of mind (Meelberg 2006, 175–176). Psychoanalysis can be seen as a semiotic theory, as it maps the problematics of subjectivity and signification of the unconscious (Välimäki 2005, 21).

In my analysis, Ballade and its intertextualities are seen to form an intertextual web, where they point to each other to create meaning (Klein 2005, 4). Fundamental to this interpretation of Ballade is the work's close relation to the song *Douleur* (pain, anguish) from the song cycle *Quatre Instants* (2002) for piano and soprano voice. Most of Ballade's material is directly derived from *Douleur*. *Quatre Instants* describes four different moments in a love affair, *Douleur*'s subject being a woman who is regretful of an erotic encounter. The song's lyrics and music are used as an intertextual, programmatic pre-text to Ballade's analysis. These intertexts are used to support the analysis of Saariaho's Ballade as a representation of a guilt and trauma. By way of offering different, even if related readings of Ballade, the analysis implicitly refutes any single interpretation as most accurate.

According to Klein & Reyland (2013, x), studies of musical narrative have mostly focused on music before modernism and much less on 20th century music. Particularly
According to Klein & Reyland (2013, x), studies of musical narrative have mostly focused on music before modernism and much less on 20th century music. Particularly the 19th century was infused with narrative models, with the rise of program music among other factors, and often postmodern music is considered less available to narrative interpretation (ibid., x & xi). Klein (2013, 12) sees that the temporal unfolding of music is perhaps an aspect most discussed in relation to musical narrativity since 1900, Jonathan Kramer's (1988) work being an influential output on the question. In order to consider Ballade's particular narrative strategies as a contemporary composition, my analysis will apply Vincent Meelberg's theory presented in his doctoral dissertation *New Sounds, new stories: narrativity in contemporary music* (2006). Meelberg approaches narrativity in contemporary music as a representation of a temporal development that the listener actively formulates into a narrative. The application of Meelberg's theory offers the first phase of the analysis. The second phase interprets the results of this analysis as representations of guilt and trauma narration.

The following chapter first examines music's narrativity, and how Saariaho's Ballade can offer strategies for a narrative interpretation. This is followed by a presentation of the components of Parakilas's ballad process that can be adaptable to Saariaho's Ballade. Then the topic of *ombra*, its close connection to the ballad process and pertinence to my analysis is introduced briefly. Lastly, the approach to narrative as a temporal development is presented, and how it can function as a method for understanding Ballade's contemporary narrative. In chapter 3 of the analysis section, I will first describe how Ballade evolves in time, focusing on events and gestures that stand out in the music. In order to consider their similarities and differences, I will make comparisons between Ballade and *Douleur*. In chapter 4, I will first analyze *Douleur*'s lyrics, detailing its psychological nature and how this is representative of the guilt and the ballad process. Then I will examine the ways in which the process exemplifies in Ballade from certain gestures to wider passages and overall form. Chapter 4.3 focuses on Ballade's *ombra* gestures, and demonstrates how they support a nuanced and layered reading of Ballade as a narrative of guilt and fear, but also desire. The analysis ends

with my reading of *Douleur* and Ballade as a trauma narrative, prompted by the way Ballade represents trauma's most essential features. This is followed by conclusions in chapter 5. The translations are my own if not mentioned otherwise.

2. CONTEMPORARY MUSIC'S NARRATIVITY AND BALLADE AS A REPRESENTATION OF GUILT AND TRAUMA

2.1 Music's narrative potential

According to Michael Klein (2005, 114), music's ability to narrate depends on how narrativity and music's referentiality are understood. If musical narrativity is seen literally as a representation of characters that perform a sequence of actions, music's referentiality falls out of its bounds. For example Carolyn Abbate (1989, 230) suggests that music cannot narrate because it lacks a "narrating survivor". In order for music to be narrative, it should consist of a past tense as a story mediated by a narrator (ibid.). This analysis takes Vincent Meelberg's (2006, 1) stand that an object can be considered a narrative even if it does not possess exactly the same characteristics as a verbal narrative. Music can be seen narrative in the way it can refer to the outside world through the description of affects or emotions, even if it is not a direct imitation of it (Klein 2005, 115). "Narrative analysis … concerns itself with describing expressive states evoked by the music and the ways that their unfolding implies a narrative." (Ibid.) The term expressive can refer to affective meanings, dramatic situations or ideas (ibid.). Parakilas's theory interlinks emotions and narrative in his interpretation of Chopin's Ballades as a representation of a guilty imagination. Meelberg (2006, 178) focuses on approaching music as a temporal development, but sees that analysis does not end in describing music's form, but that this form can be then interpreted again to attribute it with meaning, such as emotions. He sees that while it is important for the listener to grasp an idea of music's overall form, a musical experience is also about relating it to extramusical phenomena (ibid., 177).

A further question relevant to the analysis is whether Parakilas's theory that is based on tonal, Romantic works is suitable to the analysis of a contemporary composition. Most, such as Tarasti (1994; 2002), Monelle (2000) or Almén (2008), do not particularly address non-tonal music or discard it as unfit to semiotic or narrative analysis. Contemporary works can be seen to problematize the question of musical narrativity in

various ways (Meelberg 2006, 2). According to Tarasti (1994, 285), musical narrativity presupposes a tonal hierarchy that is made temporal, as well as an actorial engagement; post-modern narrativity, such as minimalism, would reject narrativity. Tonal harmonic progression has been seen as a crucial aspect in the creation of signification, and atonality a challenge from the perspective of narrativity and meaning-construction. The functions of tonal harmony with its dominant-tonic progression can be seen to create a narrative arc with a goal-directed process. (Tarasti 1994, 28; Spies 2014, 321.) However, as Klein (2013, 12 & 16) states, voice leading and tonal functions in themselves are not directly linked to musical agency: a tonal frame can be seen as an ideology which has strong implications for a narrative order, but which has been replaced by other continuities. Tarasti (1994, 286) sees that while eliminating a tonal space and center, atonal music can use models similar to tonal music in respect to temporarily as well as retaining the use of icons, indexes and symbols. Additionally, Saariaho's earlier works represent the avant-garde, but her subsequent style exemplifies a turn to some of the means of tonal music. In her earlier work, melodic aspects have been more insignificant and fragmentary (Moisala 2009, 36). Composing for voice has influenced her later instrumental writing, making it more melodic (ibid., 49). Ballade represents this later style.

As *Quatre Instants*, most of Saariaho's songs have been written for the soprano (Hautsalo 2011, 111). Saariaho has composed three complete versions of *Quatre Instants*, one for piano and soprano voice and one for orchestra and soprano, and in February 2017, a new arrangement for orchestra and soprano was performed at the Radio France's Festival Présences dedicated to Saariaho's music. Saariaho's Prélude for solo piano instead bases on *Quatre Instants*'s song *Attent*. It is common for Saariaho to elaborate the same musical material in several compositions: for example *Petals* (1988) and *Nymphéa reflection* (2001) are further explorations of the musical material of *Nymphéa* (1987) (Rofe 2011, 82–83). *Quatre Instants* in turn is developed from the musical material of her first opera, *L'Amour de Loin* (2000), to which works for orchestra and voices *Cinq Reflets de L'Amour de Loin* (2001), *Oltra mar: Seven Preludes for the New Millennium* (1999) and *Château de l'âme* (1996) relate (Moisala 2009, 48). Borrowing music from her own production is a central type of intertextuality for Saariaho (Iitti 2005, 136). Generally, titles are important to Saariaho: they often

reflect the preliminary impulse for writing the work, and later on they function as a focal point for the composition process (Moisala 2009, 60). Saariaho (2005) has stated that the composition is called Ballade because her friend, pianist Emanuel Sax, specifically asked for a composition bearing the title. This statement could be interpreted to imply that the title did not inspire the compositional process in other ways.

There are nevertheless several reasons that motivate the analysis of Saariaho's Ballade from a narrative viewpoint. Firstly, the title "ballade" associates to narrative implications and a whole history of ballade compositions, which supports a narrative listening strategy. According to Jim Samson (1989, 213), titles and genres direct a listener's interpretation of a composition, as they have their extramusical and historical references. A genre can be seen to behave like a contract between composer and listener, which may be broken (ibid.). Saariaho's Ballade particularly could be called programmatic because of its close connection to *Douleur*. Narrativity and the question of programmatic content are considered key traits of the ballade genre (Parakilas 1992, 285; Brown 2013). Some of Ballade's qualities create a general stylistic allusion to the Romantic style of piano composing. The subtle, polyrhythmic handling of the accompaniment's configurations against a vocal melody is a reminder of Chopin. Ballade's dramatic character and vocality support a narrative listening stance, supporting the impression that one is hearing a story being told. Saariaho has chosen the most dramatic and emotive, and least static, of the four songs as the basis of her Ballade. It has cumulating tensions and their releases, contrasting passages and an expressive use of rhythms and alterations in tempo regardless of its relatively short length. Moreover, as Marilyn Nonken (2015, 114) states, Saariaho's Ballade and Prelude are openly lyrical and melodically driven, as opposed to her previous spectrally-influenced explorations. It could be said that the style of writing in Ballade partly looks to the past. While Ballade's musical language is idiosyncratic, it does employ established musical conventions. In her works for the stage, Saariaho often makes use of topics common since early 17th-century operas (Hautsalo 2011, 107).

Narrative models are nevertheless often based on tonal music and base their analysis on tonal functions. In order to consider the particular narrative strategies of Ballade as a

contemporary piece, this analysis applies Meelberg's narrative model of contemporary music. My analysis is two-fold: first, Ballade is analyzed as a contemporary narrative by the application of Meelberg's model, where the focus is on its inner organization as a temporal development. This phase could be paragoned with a functional or Schenkerian analysis of tonal music. Then, the results of this analysis will be further interpreted as a representation of guilt and trauma. However, Ballade's analysis as a temporal development is equally an interpretation based on choices and does not represent any neutral level of analysis. Rather, in the application of Meelberg's theory, the analysis problematizes and explores the narrative strategies of a contemporary, non-tonal composition.

A pivotal part of Ballade's analysis as a representation of a guilty conscience is the application of its intertexts: *Douleur*'s music and lyrics. As Klein (2005, 117) states," If we wish to find in music a narrative impulse, we must look past the immediacy of the music as action, and attend to disruption, the clash of topics, and the mixing of genres in an intertextuality." Intertextuality, *intertextualité*, is a concept introduced by Julia Kristeva (1980, 36) that refers to the way an artwork, a text, is inherently infiltrated by other texts. "The text is … a permutation of texts, an intertextuality: in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another." (Ibid.) In my approach, Saariaho's Ballade is seen as a site of several other texts in dialogue, and Ballade and *Douleur* are often analyzed together, as if infiltrated by one another. The analysis focuses mostly on poietic and transhistorical intertextualities, and intertexts within a style or a canon (Klein 2005, 12). Poietic intertextuality centers on texts that an author has brought to her writing and study (ibid.). In the analysis of Ballade, these texts are *Douleur*'s 2002 version for piano and soprano and its lyrics written by Amin Maalouf (2002). Transhistorical intertextuality analyzes intertexts throughout history (ibid.); the most pertinent intertextualities in this respect are, indirectly, Chopin's Ballades, as Parakilas bases his narrative model on them, and the historical musical topic[1] of *ombra*. Following Klein (2004, 52), this analysis is an interpretation that shows paths towards "a poetics of musical meaning".

[1] According to Raymond Monelle (2000, 17) a topic is a symbol, its iconic and indexical features governed by convention. For example, a *pianto* is an iconic topic because it imitates weeping, and indexical, as it signifies the emotions associated with the type of weeping, such as grief, pain, regret and loss. Further, in the 18th century it began to signify a sigh. The tertiary model of a sign's relation to an object as icon, index or symbol derives from Charles Sanders Peirce.

The interpretation should be evaluated as a poetics, which means as a claim on how to perceive a text, not as a claim about a text (ibid.).

2.2 The ballad(e) as a representation of a guilty conscience

The perspective of guilt in my narrative analysis stems from Parakilas's narrative model for the ballade genre, and how dealing with the emotion of guilt forms its core. James Parakilas (1992) bases his model of the ballad process to an analysis of literary ballads and Chopin's representation of them in his instrumental Ballades. One central reason for the adaptation of Parakilas's model is that *Douleur* tells of regret and guilt, and while it is not based on a ballad, it shares also other features with literary ballads.

According to Parakilas (ibid., 20) the ballad's particular narrative structure made it problematic to portray in an instrumental piece. Parakilas (ibid.) refers to Gordon Gerould's (1932, 11) definition of the ballad as a genre that stresses one situation and focuses on the actions accomplished through the character's words via an impersonal narrator's voice. Relative brevity, structuring in prosody and sound, and singability of texts are conventions of the literary and sung ballad (Wurzbach 2008, 32). Parakilas (1992, 28) sees that Chopin's Ballades are not original only in their form and technique, but in their less recognized originality of programmatic principles. Parakilas (ibid., 26), referring to Dahlhaus (1989, 149), interprets that Chopin based his ballades on an analysis of the ballad as a genre instead of modelling them according to any particular ballad. To acclaim the attention of the European public while representing his nationalist tradition, Chopin evoked the idea of the ballad by treating it both as song and story (Parakilas 1992, 26–27).

Parakilas (1992, 33–34) estimates that the ballad repertoire likely known by Chopin and his contemporaries would mainly consist of the Nordic ballad tradition, and their contemporary imitations. Parakilas (1992, 33) follows William J. Entwistle's (1969) delineation, where the Nordic repertoire comprehends the ballads of Scandinavia, Britain, and Germany. Based on this ballad repertoire, Parakilas (1992, 34–35) offers a general narrative model of the literary ballad called the ballad process. Parakilas applies Claude Bremond's (1973, cited in Parakilas 1992, 35) narrative theory to the model. This process typically focuses on one character that interacts with others, producing a

change in his role as an agent to a patient, somebody passive who is acted upon (ibid.). Generally, the main character produces an act of defiance against the nature of things, and the response is a reckoning for that act (ibid.) The process as a word associates to judicy, as the character provokes and receives justice (ibid.). The reckoning is represented as just and immutable (ibid. 36). Parakilas suggests a psychological reading of ballads as the structure of a guilty conscience, where the guilt does not belong to any particular character (ibid., 37). The story as a whole is as if an invention of a guilty conscience; "the guilty conscience that seems to shape a ballad is like the conscience that shapes a dream---" (ibid., 38). Parakilas (ibid., 37) sees that the "guilt structure" of the ballad would already be manifest in the act of defiance. Guilt is defined in ballads by powerlessness. The act of defiance represents the human will, but implicit forces in the act render the will powerless, explicated in the act of reckoning. "A ballad story has the structure of a proof that a guilty conscience gives itself of its own guilt: the exercise of will is determined by the very forces that render the will powerless." (Ibid.) paste is The guilty-conscience structure taps on the listeners' own potential for guilt, as well as teaches them to accept their own powerless in order to overcome their anxieties (ibid., 38). Cut this Parakilas's psychological interpretation of the ballad process enables its adaptation to the interpretation of *Douleur*'s lyrics. The stress is not on the prosody or verse structure of a ballad story, but its psychological implications.

My aim is to examine whether Saariaho's Ballade's narration coincides with the ballad process in some of the ways guilt is represented musically. One question is whether the overall structure of Saariaho's Ballade represents the ballad process. According to Parakilas (1992, 39), Chopin understood the connection between ballad's theme and structure, and this would influence the basic form and character of the Ballades. Parakilas (ibid., 84) sees that Chopin's Ballades do not have a fixed two-part nor three-part structure, but share a common narrative form, which corresponds to the ballad process. Chopin's Ballades have, like the ballad, a structure where a story is told in one stretch. A force which is defied or suppressed at the beginning creates tension throughout the work, asserting itself with power at the end (ibid.). That structure would be resolved by a return or a restoration, but with changes having taken place (ibid.). Overall, the structure of Chopin's Ballades contains three stages: statement of themes,

their transformation, and resolution, following the literary ballad process, which moves from the act of defiance to the movement toward reckoning and to the reckoning itself (ibid., 72). Chopin's Ballades are in sextuple meter, which creates associations of nocturnes and barcarolle, which allude to night, dream, love and song, such as literary ballads would (ibid., 55). It implicates the story's dreamlike structure (ibid.).

Another subject of analysis is how the transitions in Saariaho's Ballade coincide with the meaning they have, according to Parakilas's interpretation, in Chopin's Ballades. The transitions in Chopin's Ballades are often thematic transformations (Parakilas 1992, 68). Parakilas (ibid., 69) calls thematic convergence a transformation where a theme transforms to another while modulating to a distant key. The returned theme has been absent for some time (ibid.). According to Parakilas some of these transitions represent the structure of a guilty conscience that, in a quiet, unguarded moment, suddenly recognizes a suppressed memory (ibid., 70). The modulation process resembles the recalling of a remote memory, while the process of convergence gives it the impression of having always been present, unrecognized (ibid. 69).

Also Saariaho's Ballade's vocality and possibility of representing an external narrator will be examined. According to Parakilas (1992, 27), Chopin alluded to ballads' distinctive prosody and melody – its sounding word and idiosyncratic diction, refrains, short lines and stanzas – besides the basic model of the ballad process. In Chopin's Ballades one voice always sounding, and only occasionally there are two of equal importance (ibid., 56). Parakilas (ibid.) sees that Chopin's Ballades convey both the voice of the narrator that tells the story, and the voice of the characters in the story; the story unfolds as a structure of utterances. The impersonal narrative voice appears as bare-sounding utterances at pivotal moments, just as the literary ballad's impersonal narrative voice (ibid., 58).

2.3 *Ombra* gestures

In this analysis, the significations of some of Ballade's gestures will be further analyzed applying the topic of *ombra*. Ballade has singular gestures that are characteristic of the topic, such as *glissandi*, *tremolandi* and repetitions. *Ombra*'s thematics also relate to

Parakilas's definition of the ballad as a story of guilt, reprehensible action and punishment. The ballad process centers on ballade's overall form, and *ombra* permits a complementary way of approaching Ballade's thematics by focusing on the significations of its individual gestures. As Jonathan Kramer (1988, 161) states, all music has two temporal continua, where one consists of the temporal succession of events, and the other of conventionalized meanings of gestures. It is not presumed that Ballade would be a representation of an *ombra* scene as it were in the 18th century; rather, I will study in what way Ballade and *Douleur* can be seen to contain traces of musical devices that historically associate to *ombra*.

Ombra is a term first used in the early 20th century to describe a compositional style applied in 18th century opera (McClelland 2012, 1). *Ombra* was used to evoke the supernatural as ghosts, gods, moral values and punishments, inciting feelings of awe and terror (Ratner 1980, 24). Quoting Moyer (1992, 288, quoted in McClelland 2012, 6), McClelland distinguishes it to represent a fear of death and hell. McClelland (ibid., 11) sees that the *ombra* style can be regarded as one possible musical manifestation of the sublime, as defined by Edmund Burke (1990, 53): "The passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror." By the end of the 18th century, *ombra* style began to appear in instrumental music and the emerging genre of *Lied* music (McClelland 2012, 203 & 219). According to Klein (2005, 80), *ombra* has attained a more psychological meaning since the 18th century. He interprets that rather than the terror being an outside forces punishment, *ombra* began to represent an inner force that splits the ego. Klein (2005, 80) relates *ombra* to Sigmund Freud's (2005) definition of the *unheimlich* (uncanny). According to Freud (ibid., 64), an uncanny sentiment arises when repressed childhood complexes activate again through the power of some impression, when primitive conceptions that belong to the past seem to regain strength. Ballade's elements that recall *ombra* will be interpreted to relate to its theme of guilt, and additionally they connect to my trauma reading. Most central *ombra* gestures in Ballade's analysis are different types of repetitions, sigh motives, *tremolo* effects, rising and falling scales and

sudden silences and outbursts (McClelland 2012, 225), as well as the mechanical repetition of musical material (Klein 2005, 87).

2.4 Trauma narrative

Besides analyzing Ballade as a representation of guilt, I will offer a reading of it as a representation of trauma narrative. Ballade's most central qualities that motivate this interpretation are its repetitiveness, sudden moments and textural changes, and *Douleur*'s lyrics. *Douleur*'s lyrics will further be observed as representations of dissociation. According to Susan J. Brison (1999, 41), dissociation and repetition compulsion are one of the central features of trauma. A traumatized person lacks motivation to pursue a reconstruction of an ongoing narrative, and the telling might be out of control and compulsively repeated (ibid., 44 & 47). A trauma breaks the ongoing narrative through damaging connections within the remembered past, lived present and anticipated future (ibid., 41). According to Caruth (2016, 6), trauma is a story of belated experience. Caruth (ibid.) refers to Freud (2015) in stating that trauma is something incomprehensible as it occurs, only returning to haunt the victim later. The emotions of guilt and shame often associate to traumatic memories (Sturken 1999, 235). Trauma and guilt are also similar in how they relate to memory; as a guilty conscience is marked by a repressed memory that suddenly seeps to surface in an unguarded moment (Parakilas 1992, 70), so can trauma appear as striking flashbacks to the event that is the source of suffering (Brison 1999, 40). Akhtar (2014, 69), referring to Freud (1949, 91), defines guilt as a form of anxiety. Freud (2005, 55) defines anxiety as something repressed which recurs. Guilt and trauma both create anxiety that lead to a failed attempt to avoid or repress the memory.

Traumatic memories differ from narrative memories in that they are more connected to the body (Brison 1999, 42). Traumatic memory is a type of somatic memory. Brison (ibid.) refers to Roberta Culbertson (1995, 174) as follows: "full of fleeting images, the percussion of blows, sounds, and movements of the body – disconnected, cacophonous, the cells suffused with the active power of adrenaline, or coated with the anesthesizing numbness of noradrenaline." Interesting are Culbertson's use of musical metaphors to describe the physical state of a trauma victim. Likewise, *ombra* gestures are iconic

because of their way of representing physical reactions: according to McClelland (2012, 119), *tremolandi, glissandi* and heartbeats can all be musical depictions of physical responses to fear. Trauma theory resonates at some level with Parakilas's interpretation of the ballad. According to Brison (1999, 41), in a human inflicted trauma the victim's subjectivity becomes useless and worthless, as the abuse from the part of the tormentor renders the victim to a mere object. The transition from a subject to an object by the actions of someone recalls Bremond's (1973, cited in Parakilas 1992, 35) definition of the ballade as a character's transition from an active agent to a passive one that is acted upon. According to Brison (1999, 40), "a traumatic event is one in which a person feels utterly helpless in the face of a force that is perceived to be life-threatening."

When considering musical narrativity in relation to emotions, Meelberg ponders on the possibility of a musical depiction or elicitation of a psychological trauma. He refers to Kiene Brillenburg Wurth (2002, 253–255), who argues that the type of contemporary music that both represents and frustrates temporal development, by lacking closure, is an enactment of a traumatic event. Wurth sees that trauma is a rupture outside normal human experience, rendering a representation of trauma in music paradoxical. As there is no available memory network for a traumatic memory, it is forgotten, but at the same time unforgettable because of being outside of being processed by those networks. (Ibid.) Wurth (2002, 254) does nevertheless state that "a traumatic experience can be posited as a twentieth-century (alternative) version of the eighteenth-century experience of the sublime" – and the sublime, according to McClelland (2012, 11), is musically represented in *ombra*. In Meelberg's (2006, 189) words, Wurth sees that music that lacks tense, i.e. music that does not contain a musical present and past, would represent a traumatic event. Also Brison (1999, 42), referring to Shay (1994, 172), states that a traumatic memory is not narrative, but manifests as re-occurring sensory experiences, dreams and flashbacks. Meelberg (ibid.,190) concludes that in practice it is very difficult to create music that would lack musical tense, as it is difficult to create music of actual stasis. In this analysis, also inexpressibility, is seen to find a musical expression in silences, pauses and stoppages (Välimäki 2005, 162).

2.5 Contemporary music's narrative as a temporal development

In order to consider Ballade's particular narrative strategies as a contemporary composition, the first level of my analysis will delineate Ballade's narrative with the application of Vincent Meelberg's (2006) narrative theory of contemporary music. Applying Mieke Bal's (1997) narrative theory, Meelberg (2006, 2) defines narrative as "the representation of a temporal development, which consists of a succession of events". At the core of Meelberg's theory is the listener as an active constructor of a narrative. Meelberg (ibid., 33) argues that as we attempt to comprehend the music when listening, we try to structure it as if it were a story, a musical narrative. Narrative listening can be seen as "a suggestion for a particular listening strategy" (ibid., 6). As opposed to arguments about contemporary music's inability to narrate, Meelberg (ibid., 206) suggests that atonal music would in particular attract narrative listening because its narration is unconventional in respect to tonal works, where the narrativizing process is implicit. The listener has to actively construct and make an effort to understand by creating causation and linearity in the music, and this renders it a conscious activity[2] (ibid., 208). As Tarasti (1994, 286) states, the more the music encourages a disengagement, the more the listener tries to fill the gap it creates. As atonal musical narrative foregrounds the components of its narrative, Meelberg (ibid., 209– 210) calls it metanarrative: "a story about the principles of narrativity".

According to Meelberg (2006, 16), a musical listening experience is formed of the experience of an event or series of events. What determines the understanding of the overall structure and progression of a piece of music are its particularly significant changes, and it is these changes that the listener experiences as divisions into events. However, events in music are not concrete but rather representations of events. (Ibid., 74.). A musical event is a transition from one state to another state. An event can likewise be interpreted as a transition from a state where sounds begin to resemble each other to a state where the resemblance is fading, or a transition from a state of beginning

[2] Meelberg's idea of listening is contemplating listening, which is associated with art music listening, and could be criticized of representing something of an "ideal listener". Even in a music situation that invites a contemplative listening stance, a listener's focus is not necessarily continuously, solely and actively on the music, but her/his attention level varies, as well as the focus of attention. For the purpose of this narrative analysis the concept of "listener" is used, but understood as an abstraction.

continuity to a state where it has ended (ibid., 83). Closures instead mark out individual events (ibid., 77). A musical closure is for example as ”a temporal interval that is larger than the immediately preceding ones, a sound that is significantly different from the immediately preceding sounds or a halt in a continuous change. These kinds of closure are created by the interplay of tension and resolution as represented by the music---” (ibid.). Meelberg (ibid.) sees that it is the inability to hear closures is one of the reasons that renders contemporary music unintelligible to listeners.

Meelberg (2006, 11) suggests a possibility to distinguish between a musical past and a musical present, representing musical tense, basing his statement mostly to Suzanne Fleischman's (1990, 15 & 18) definition of tense as reference time and location time. Musical tense in Meelberg's (ibid.,111) interpretation is what establishes a relation between an ongoing musical present and a musical past as a representation of events. Because of this, it is a prerequisite for musical narrativity: a musical work without musical tense does not represent events (ibid.,112). Thus, the temporal description of Ballade's musical elements and developments necessarily requires a retrospective glance at the music; while the present is sounding, there is no certainty, only expectations, as to what it turns out to be. Meelberg (2006, 126) also makes use of the concept of musical markedness, which is taken from Robert S. Hatten's (1994) theory.[3] Meelberg (2006, 129) states that the change between markedness and unmarkedness continues to be an important feature in atonal music. Because contemporary compositions do not function on standardized musical conventions, musical paradigms have to be created individually of each piece (ibid.,129). This happens by observing which sounds are highlighted in a composition and their combination into larger events (ibid.). The narrative analysis of Ballade, then, requires the identification of these marked sounds and elements and their relation to the rest of the material.

Jonathan Kramer's theory on musical temporality, introduced in *The Time of Music* (1988), will further inform my temporal analysis of Ballade. Kramer (ibid., 161) sees

[3] Deriving from linguistics, "the marked term specifies phonological, grammatical or conceptual information which is not made specific by the more general, unmarked term" (Hatten 1994, 34). In adapting the concept to music, Hatten (ibid., 37) interprets that marked terms reflect a narrower range of expressive meaning and less frequent usage as opposed to unmarked ones. It should not be confused with salience, which refers to "the perception of expressive focal points" (ibid., 64). The way they musical event is marked differs depending on the musical context (ibid.).

that all music has two temporal continua, where one consists of the temporal succession of events, and the other of conventionalized meanings of gestures. Gestures appeal to the listener's ability to anticipate and remember musical happenings (ibid.). Linearity is "the determination of some characteristic(s) of music in accordance with implications that arise from earlier events of the peace" (ibid., 20). Linear time is a processive temporal continuity, where previous events imply latter ones, and are consequences of earlier ones (ibid.). Tonality is the most pervasive expression of linearity, as it bases on the idea of cause and effect, progress and goal orientation (ibid., 23). Nonlinear time instead is "the determination of characteristic(s) of music in accordance with implications that arise from principles or tendencies governing an entire piece or section." (Ibid., 20). Kramer defines much of atonal 20th century music to exhibit a time sense he calls nondirected linearity. It has a directed continuity of motion, but without a clearly implied goal. (Ibid., 39.)

According to Meelberg (2006, 2) music's narrative could be said to be tied to performance; music exists only when it is actually sounding. Performance influences the experience of the music to a large degree, which controls its "degree of narrativity" (ibid., 70). Because of this the performer, apart from the composer, is a creator of the music (ibid., 67). Meelberg adapts the concept of focalisation, taken from Bal (1997, 78), to musical performance. Focalization refers to the way the story is communicated to us, colouring the story with subjectivity (Meelberg 2006, 67). In music, "performance acts as musical focalization, the point from which the musical events are perceived" (ibid., 68).

My analysis of Ballade focuses on its sounding performance, but uses the score as a tool. The aural analysis attempts to describe how the music unfolds in time, with a focus on events recognizable through listening alone. Besides this, the score and a graphic analysis (Example 1) are used to demonstrate some details in the music. For an aural analysis of Ballade, I have chosen Daria Iossifova's (2011) performance on YouTube. Its easy availability was one of the principal factors influencing this choice, and it is the only professional performance of the work found online at the moment. For *Douleur*'s analysis, I have used the written score and Karita Mattila's (2007) recording. Judith

Lochhead's (2016) application of recent cartography in music analysis will inform my graphic representation of Ballade.

3. TEMPORAL ANALYSIS OF SAARIAHO'S BALLADE

3.1 Ballade's musical progression

In this chapter, I will describe Ballade's music as it evolves in time. The description bases on aural analysis, but is to some extent influenced by an examination of the score. The analysis is based on repeated, i.e. cumulative listening to comprehend the composition's elements and relations more clearly (Kramer 1988, 206). This means that some of Ballade's constituents might appear more distinguished than in a first or second listening. The aural analysis depicts the overall progression of the music, and delineates repeating gestures and passages and major musical events and closures following Meelberg's (2006) theory.

Ballade begins with an upward *arpeggio* in *crescendo* gesture, covering roughly four registers. It lands to a high, long sound. Two repeated sounds are heard in the base, and faster sounds that seem to move around the long treble sound. One of them is more emphasized and turns out to be the first note of a slow-paced phrase at 00:10 (m. 3). The melodic phrase appears foregrounded, has a descending *diminuendo* overall arc and is played against a slow, dotted rhythm in a low pitch. In 00:19 (m. 7), the base moves to a higher register with a leaping gesture, followed by accelerating *crescendo* repetitions of a single pitch. This gives momentum at 00:24 (m. 8) to a passage where two patterns, ascending quintole patterns and slower descending notes, emerge from a concentrated line. A rising melody of longer values moves within the texture, but it is more apparent in the score than in the recording. In 00:31 (m. 11), the phrase ends to a dramatic, downward leap of nearly an octave, accompanied again with an accelerating, *crescendo* repetition in the base, reminding of the previous ones. This gives an impulse to another rising *arpeggio* gesture that lands to descending, chromatic *rallentando* gestures in the middle register at 00:36 (m. 13), accompanied with another syncopated rhythm similar to 00:10 (m. 3). The left hand gesture moves downwards with a *glissando*. The music gives a sense of winding down and beginning to arrive somewhere. The passage 00:36–00:40 (m. 13) turns out to function as a soft closure a transition to the next larger event.

The consecutive passage 00:40–01:03 (mm. 14–23) has a sense of quiet hesitation. A *rubato* repetition of a single pitch or adjacent pitches in the middle register is prominent, joined with a more vocal line. At 01:04, downward and upward *glissandi* create a sense of accumulating movement and function as a bridge to a widening registral movement in 01:07 (mm. 25–28), similar to that of 00:24 (m. 8). It is followed by the same dramatic downward leap in the melody at 01:13 (m. 28). The leap's accompaniment, again a fast repetition of a single, low pitch, quickly slows and quiets down. The moment signals another closure.

A silent, continuous, polyrhythmic two-voiced movement in a low register emerges from the base repetitions at 01:19 (m. 29), and at 01:29 (m. 31), it is joined by a melody moving within. The passage appears more homophonic compared to the preceding fragmentary registral movements and polyphonic texture. The texture contains subtle harmonic changes. At 01:53 (m. 38), the movement is suddenly interrupted by loud, syncopated clusters, which soon cease, permitting the previous texture and melody to continue. At 02:07 (m. 42), the sudden interruption occurs again, and winds down, as if giving room to the texture again. In 02:25 (m. 47) the texture narrows down to two melodic lines of alternating pitches, slows down, and both melodies in turned cell to a long sound, and the movement of the music stops. The higher sound lands to one quarter tone higher, giving it a sense of a resolution, signaling an end to the event.

At 02:37 (m. 50), a rising left-hand melody appears that together with another melodic line alternate hastily between two semitones, as if gaining momentum. The music begins to move registrally, and one can distinguish a vocal melody and a faster, more ornamental melody or accompanying line. At 02:56 (m. 59), the development is suddenly stopped with another downward leap followed again by fast, loud and repetitive sounds in a low register, and the music cuts to a new event. The melody appears, for the first time after the short passage at 00:10 (m. 3), bare and distinguishable, and moves above a syncopated, repetitive, harmonically static accompaniment. Like the homophonic passage before, it starts at a low register, but this time it has a more intense and agitated character. At 03:10 (m. 65) the melody moves higher, and at 03:13 (m. 68), the accompanying figure too shifts higher and alters, but

nevertheless remains pulse-like and repetitive. The volume rises and the tempo accelerates. At 03:16 (m. 69), the melody at times widens to cover two semiquavers. The melody begins to repeat the same, short phrase together with the accompaniment. At 03:26 (m. 75), the melody as if breaks into a *tremolo*. The left hand rises upwards with a fast figure, until at 03:31 (m. 79) the movement stops in a halt while the sounds still resonate with the help of the pedal. This functions as a strong closure to the event.

The following, quieter passage begins at 03:35 (m. 80) with a circular figure from the base, joined by another melody in the middle register. The moment resembles that of 00:40 (m. 14) and 02:27 (m. 50), each time starting a calmer passage. At 03:44 (m. 83) the lower voice begins to move in fast, more decorative figures over a slower melodic phrase. Melodic phrases are followed or accompanied by short *tremolandi* with circular motives. At 04:04 (m. 91) two louder chords appear that resemble the interruptions of the first homophonic passage. At 04:07 (m. 92) a loud and poignant rising melody followed by a dramatic downward leap appears. It is similar to those heard at 00:31 (m.11), 01:14 (m. 28) and 02:56 (m. 59), but barer, accompanied only with a few notes at a higher register. The leap continues as a downward *glissando* to the base that quiets down. The melody, downward leap and *glissando* function as a closure, as they lead to a new type of passage with a sound that is significantly different from the immediately preceding sounds (Meelberg 2006, 77).

04:14 (m. 95) continues as quiet, rumbling patterns that resemble that of 01:18–02:38 (mm. 29–49), but they rise fairly quickly in register. As in many previous instances, the distinction between melodic line and accompaniment is a continuum. At 04:23 (m. 97) onwards a melody line situated within the two slowly rising and constantly evolving patterns is distinguishable. At 04:30 (m. 100), there is a harmonic shift that gives a sense of landing somewhere. At 04:47 (m. 104) the figuring moves higher. The music becomes all the more quiet and transparent. At 05:07 (m. 108), the patterning simplifies and the higher voice slows down in half, becoming melodic in turn. Its last and longest, emphasized sound at 05:11 (m. 109) is resolving in relation to the previous notes, and also the lower patterning stops. This is followed by a silence and a solitary downward melody that slows down and quiets further, before another pause of near silence. This

indicates a closure. At 05:31 (m. 111), a sudden, tumultuous rising *arpeggio* appears, like that which initiated the music, and continues with fast, circular rising figures and another higher tone in a syncopated rhythm resembling the repetitions heard previously. The repetition doubles its speed and the music becomes louder still, with accompanying rising, intense *arpeggi*, before at 05:38 (m. 15) the tension releases to a long, downward *glissando* and lands to a low note. Its harmony is diatonic in comparison to the previous chromatic passage, which is further clarified by a change of pedal. The pedal stays down, and the music slowly dissipates to silence.

3.2 Ballade's narrative as a temporal development

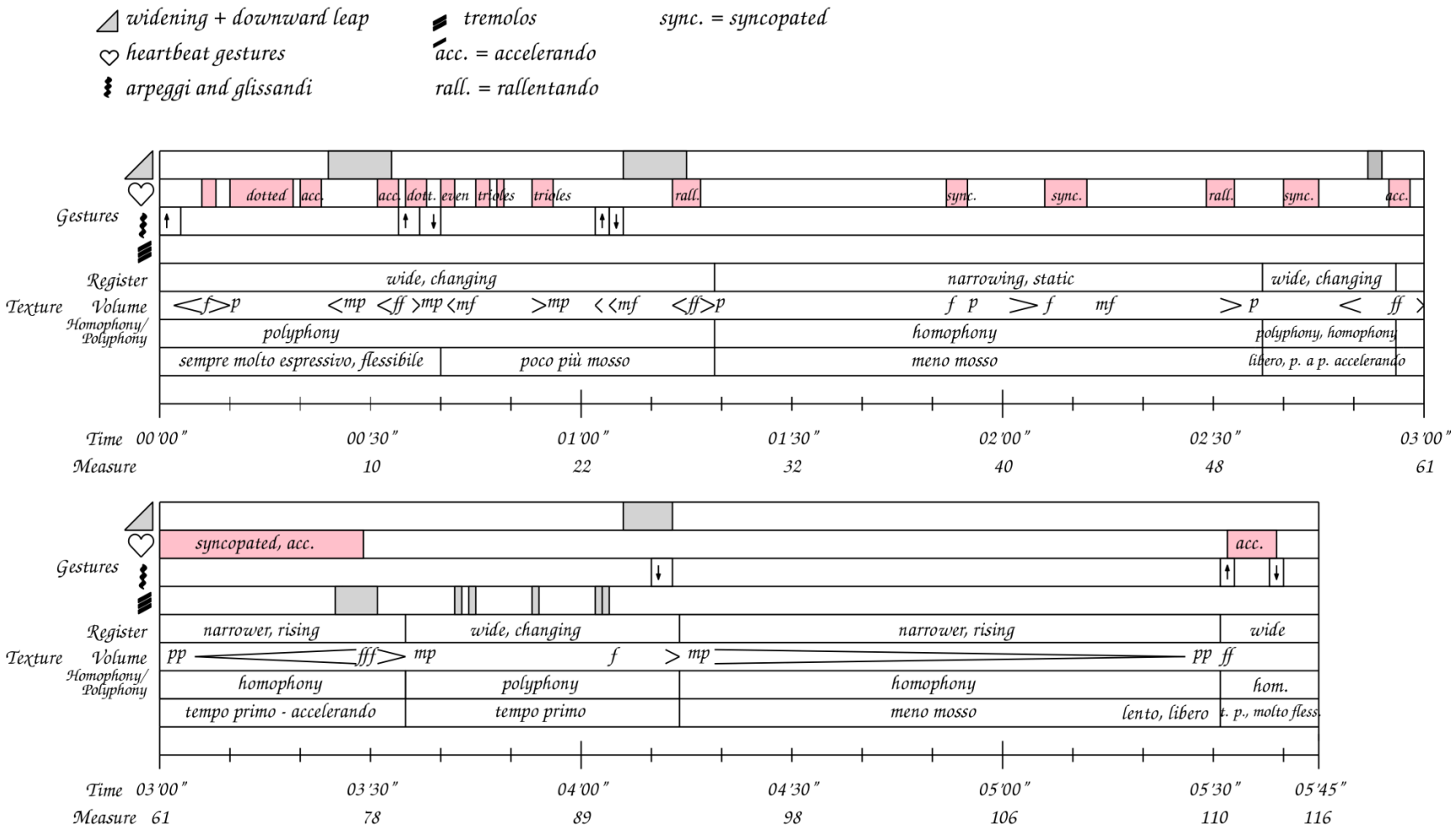
3.2.1 Texture and form

With a retrospective look at the music, one notices that Ballade contains distinguishable representations of closures and events, apparent as changes both in texture, register and dynamics. A relation between an ongoing musical present and the musical past, and thus a musical tense, is established. There are three sections in Ballade that are distinctive because of their homophonic texture. The term texture illustrates the vertical build of the music and can describe for example timbre, intensity, attack, the use of rests, or the vertical spacing of chords (Newbould 2015). In my analysis, texture can further refer to the rhythmic density of voices. Homophonic texture can either be homorhythmic, or a texture with a clear distinction between melody and accompaniment (Hyer 2015); Ballade's homophonic sections belong to the latter type. The homophonic sections are indicated in the score as *meno mosso* (mm. 29–49), *tempo primo–accelerando* (mm. 60–79) and *meno mosso* (mm. 95–108). From the perspective of its most noticeable textural shifts between polyphony and homophony, Ballade's form appears quite symmetrical. At the centre of the composition, the homophonic *tempo primo–accelerando* -passage of cumulating tension stands out, surrounded by calmer, more polyphonic events (*libero–poco a poco più accelerando* in mm. 50-59 and *tempo primo* in mm. 80–94), which in turn are preceded or followed by homophonic *meno mosso* -passages (mm. 29–49 and 95–110) that both dissolve slowly.

The *tempo primo–accelerando* is the most tense part of Ballade and has a constant pulse because of its repetitive, rhythmic figuring. The second *meno mosso* -sequence is a

contrasting mirror to the *tempo primo–accelerando*; its register rises, but becomes gradually slower and quieter with a marking *ppp*, which in the arch of the composition seems like a resolution. The suspended note in m. 109 is a b^2, which has a sense of a consonant in regards to the preceding harmony and the general harmonic center. It is followed by a solitary, descending melodic phrase, which is as if liberated from the accompaniment. The frantic, short ending passage functions as a *coda* (mm. 113-116), and the opening *arpeggio* and closing *glissando* frame the composition. In the *coda*, the *arpeggio* lands to an insistently repetitive b^2, instead of the semi-quaver a^2 of the beginning. The b^2 could be interpreted as a resolution, especially when the chromatic figuring ends to a diatonic, downward *glissando*. The beginning (mm. 1–12) could be interpreted as an introduction because of its fragmentary and wandering nature, before giving a sense of landing to a polyphonic passage (*Poco più mosso* at mm. 14–28). The roughly symmetrical structure reflects the composer's appeal to symmetry and her tendency to break it (Moisala 2009, 90), as the symmetry is only partial when observing for example the length of the measures.

The polyphonic passages could be said to constantly hover between polyphony and homophony. The examination of melody and texture has been a starting point for Saariaho (2005) in composing Ballade. "In this short piece I wanted to write music with a melody that grows out of the texture before descending into it again; a work that constantly shifts from a complex, multi-layered texture to concentrated single lines and back again." One can at times distinguish a leading melodic line, but also the more accompanying sounds are melodic in nature. Often accompaniment becomes melody, or the contrary. The polyphonic passages nevertheless distinctly differ from the homophonic sections, which have a clearly distinguishable melody against a continuous, repetitive accompaniment. Further, the passages differ in their treatment of other textural aspects: dynamics, register and rhythm. The beginning until m. 28 is most fragmentary and improvisatory in nature, consisting of swifter tempo and volume alterations, rapid registral movements and varying rhythmic figurations. The score shows a continuous melodic line in *Poco più mosso* (mm. 14–28), but it is not always distinguishable from Iossifova's recording, as the faster figurations take up the attention of the listener. The homophonic events are more linear dynamically, with a fairly



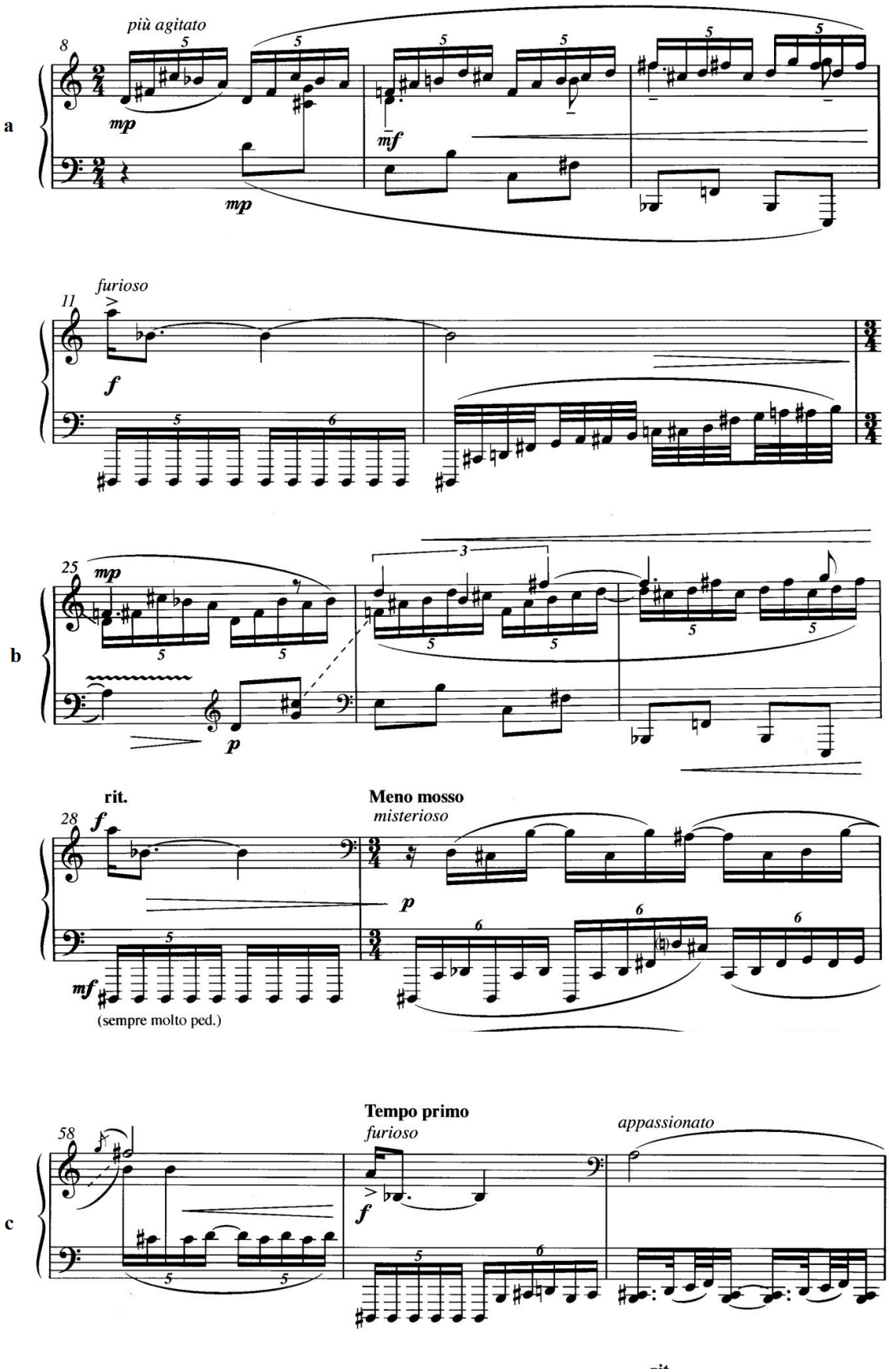
Example 1. A graphic analysis of Ballade.

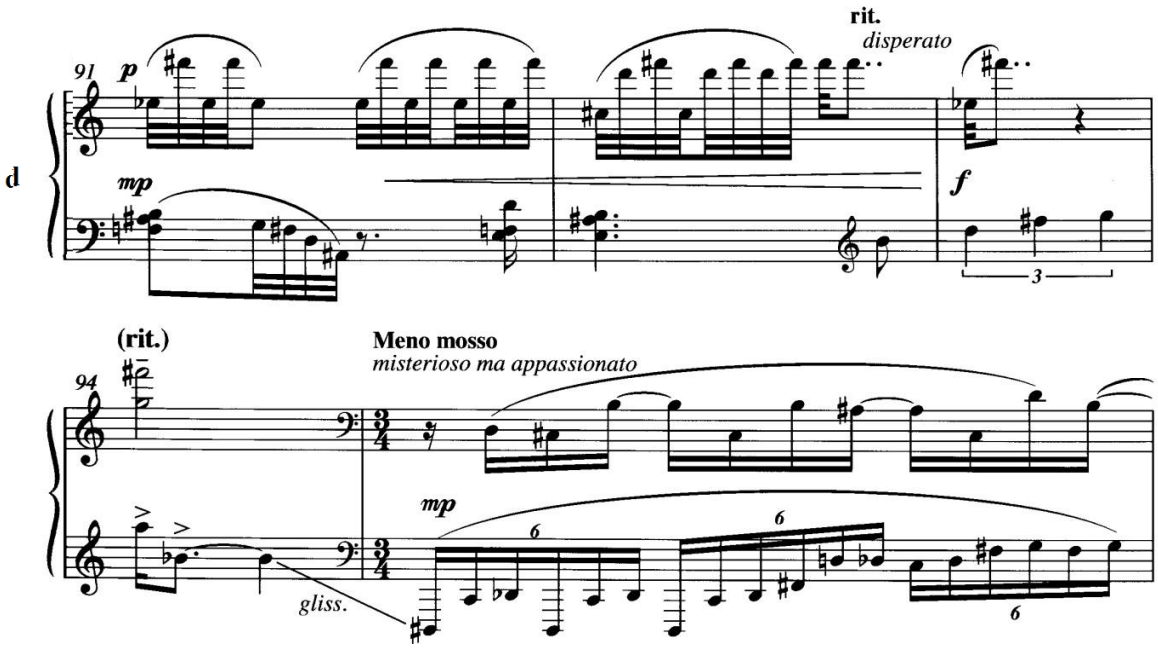
consistent volume or an ongoing *crescendo* or *diminuendo*, as well as a narrower registral space and more gradual movement. Dynamics and registral movements are exemplified in Ballade's graphic analysis (Example 1).[4] Also Ballade's more polyphonic sections become more regular as compared to the beginning, first appearing as quintoles in mm. 53–58, then as 32nd-notes in mm. 83–92. All in all, Ballade's texture becomes more homophonic over time, which supports the melody, and is another factor that breaks Ballade's symmetry.

3.2.2 Gestures and repetition

Ballade has many repetitions of single pitches, alternating tones or short patterns. Some elements and gestures appear repeatedly in the composition, most distinctive being the widening passage and downward leap. The melodic, *marcato* augmented seventh leap downwards is followed by fast, repetitive D¹#'s, a scale, a downward *glissando*, a slowing down of the repetition, or a new harmonic pattern. In these instances, the listener is lead to new musical passages. The repeated gestures in Saariaho's Ballade appeal to the memory of the listener, and could be said to form another, separate temporal level which breaks the linear succession of events (Kramer 1988, 161). It is noteworthy that first a larger entity of the widening gesture and downward leap, *più agitato–furioso*, of mm. 8–11 is repeated in mm. 25–28, then only a shorter fragment with the vocal leap and the repetitive accompaniment in mm. 59 and 92–94, as if they would be recollections of the earlier instances (Example 2). As noted, apart from m. 59's leap of one octave lower, the leaps always appear in the same pitches. Their function is transitional, and they operate as signs that divide the composition in parts. The upward *arpeggi* and downward *glissandi* also appear highlighted, because they often appear in transitional passages. The silence in m. 79 stands out as well, as its cuts the flow of the music. Again, it appears in a moment of closure of a major musical event.

[4] The graphic is partly based on an aural analysis of Iossifova's recording, so some dynamic markings might slightly differ from the score.


a
più agitato
8
mp
mf
mp
furioso
11
f
b
25
mp
p
rit.
28
f
Meno mosso
misterioso
p
mf
(sempre molto ped.)
c
Tempo primo
furioso
58
f
appassionato



Example 2. Transitional downward leaps in Ballade. © 2009 Chester Music Ltd.

Meelberg (2006, 165) observes repetition in relation to narrativity. Making a distinction between repetition and stasis, Meelberg interprets that repetition suspends the temporal process, but unlike stasis, it creates a connection between past, present and future events. Because of this, the repetitions could be interpreted to add up to the narrativity of Ballade, as they help the listener to structure and thus "narrativize" (ibid., 36) the musical processes in Ballade. Additionally, repeated downward leaps could be defined as musically marked, as they stand out in the music and their meaning is narrower in respect to some other material because of their transitional function (Hatten 1994, 66). According to Peter Brooks (1984, 99–100), repetition hovers between forward and backward movement: it can be regarded as a suspension of the temporal process, but still necessary to understanding, as it connects the past and the present as related, and future more predictive.

3.2.3. Linearity and narrativity

In accordance with Kramer (1988, 409), Meelberg (ibid.,148) interprets that narrative meaning relates to linearity. Meelberg (2006, 27) and Kramer (1988, 170) see that linear processes in atonal music can operate in other than tonal domains. When repetition and

goal-directedness are absent in atonal music, the music is more challenging for the listener to structure (Meelberg 2006, 28). Applying Kramer's (1988, 20) distinction between linear and nonlinear musical time, Ballade consists of properties that add both to its linearity and nonlinearity. A melodic line is a distinguishable element in Ballade. It generally moves in slower note values compared to the more textural elements, and its phrasing is vocal: it formulates in phrases with upward and downward movements, which generally don't contain extreme leaps. The melody's repetitive elements and harmonic figurations often revolve around c^{1}# and d^{1}. The continuous voice leading is perhaps the most important element in creating linearity.

Ballade is not a tonal composition, in that it would be based on tonal progressions, functions and their hierarchies. Nevertheless it has a sense of direction and recognizable points of tension and release. There are larger shifts in the music that are recognizable to the listener. Musical linearity in Ballade is executed with rhythmic, dynamic and registral factors, as well as with alterations in texture. The *tempo primo–accelerando* has a sense of a constantly intensifying tension, and formally it is perceived as a culminating point in the arch of the music. The composition has a distinguishable point of greatest tension, which in itself is characteristic of tonal Western art music, even if this culmination is not executed tonally (ibid., 25). Saariaho's Ballade, even if an atonal composition, contains repetition, and its melodicity creates a sense of direction. The goal is nonetheless unknown for the listener: Ballade represents nondirected linearity. The repetitions of certain gestures can give an expectation about the ending of a gesture as it has already been heard before; the descending downward leap is one of those gestures.

According to Meelberg (2006, 29), a listener cannot listen to atonal music in the same manner as to a tonal peace because of the lack of familiar harmonies or melodicity. On the other hand, Meelberg (ibid., 38) says that a listener accustomed to the classical tradition assimilates atonal music to that tradition. In Saariaho's piece, the melodicity and at times Impressionistic or Romantic texturing of the work might invite such a listening. Saariaho's spectral attitude, as Nonken (2015, 13) calls spectrally influenced composing, is apparent in Ballade's vague score indications *ped ad lib. (sempre molto*

ped.). The overtonal sonorities are amplified by repetitions, *tremolandi*, *arpeggi* and *glissandi* and pauses in activity in mm. 2, 49, 79, 110 and 115–116 that draw the listener's attention to the decaying harmonies. The extensive use of pedal is an important factor in creating stylistic allusions both to Impressionist and Romantic composers. Nonken (ibid., 53) states that Debussy's conception of respiration and resonance would have prefigured postmodern developments, such as Saariaho's "breathing music". Debussy's works are distinctly sectional, each part is defined by its temporal and textural character (ibid., 50), which is another stylistic feature in common with Ballade. Ballade creates an impression of a tonality, where harmonies built over B form a harmonic center, and movements to B ♭ create tension. At certain instances one can identify a harmony of B diminished, minor 7th, major 7th or augmented 7th. The *tempo primo–accelerando* forms a B diminished harmony in the accompaniment.

Another clear invitation to the assimilation is the composition's traditional title – depending on the listener's cultural background, s/he might attain a listening stance where the composition is situated against a background of other known Ballades, perhaps in an attempt to find both similarities and differences compared to them. According to Meelberg (2006, 75), even if music is always temporal, not all music can be considered to represent a musical development, and because of this, not all music is narrative. Saariaho's Ballade contains distinguishable closures and thus discrete events. The linear elements, such as vocality, exemplify that Saariaho's examinations on manipulating musical time are less poignant than in her earlier works, which contain slow transitions between sound fields. The principal actors[5] undergoing transformations in Ballade are texture, register and dynamics, as compared to for example melody or harmony. As Ballade contains representations of events, a relation between the ongoing musical present and the musical past, and thus a musical tense, is established. A musical tense is a prerequisite for musical narrativity (ibid., 112). According to Meelberg (ibid., 214), "a structure that exhibits a certain degree of linearity and goal-directedness can be considered a narrative structure, for it is through these components that a temporal

[5] A musical actor is connected to musical closure. Meelberg (2006, 83) defines it as "the musical parameter or parameters that cause closures, i.e. the musical parameter(s) that create(s) musical events". The musical parameters that change during a musical event can be defined as musical actors, as an actor both causes and experiences events (ibid.).

development can be represented." Following Meelberg's theory, Saariaho's Ballade can be considered a narrative piece. In Ballade, the principal parameter undergoing changes is texture, and the interplay between texture, melody, register and dynamics could be interpreted as the representation of a temporal development. Ballade's interruptions and repetitions could be interpreted as instances that put to the forefront the process of musical narration as an artefact (Meelberg 2006, 206). They draw attention equally to the means and techniques it attempts to narrate with than to the narrated event itself (ibid., 209). In this way, Ballade foregrounds the means of narration and is representative of contemporary music's metanarrative character. Kramer (1988, 409) defines his concept of linearity to correspond roughly with narrativity. From this perspective, the elements which add up to the linearity of Saariaho's Ballade, such as melody and pulse, would exemplify its narrativity.

3.3 Comparisons between Ballade and *Douleur*

Melodically, many of Ballade's phrases in their entity can be traced to *Douleur*'s vocal writing. The soprano part could be said to have been transposed to Ballade's melody. The difference lies mostly in how the melody is situated registrally, and how phrases are combined together. For example in the first *meno mosso,* the melody moves an octave lower within the figurations in Ballade than in *Douleur*. Further, Ballade's melody in mm. 14–19 is different from *Douleur*'s mm. 43–47. The rising gesture with which Ballade begins is identical to *Douleur*'s m. 28, but is marked *mp, crescendo* and *f,* not *diminuendo* and *p*. This gives a more dramatic function to Ballade's gesture. Interestingly, the beginning's playing instructions differ between the compositions, even if otherwise almost identical. *Douleur* is marked *furioso, disperato* with 108 beats per minute, while Ballade is *sempre molto espressivo, flessibile* with a marking of 56–68 bpm. This gives way to a more contemplative interpretation of Ballade. The many *glissandi* of Ballade are absent from the piano part of *Douleur,* but some are found in the soprano in mm. 19, 41 and 98 with a registral distance of a semitone to a minor sixth. In general, Ballade contains more registral movement, which adds up to its textual density. Ballade has a transition to the *tempo primo–accelerando* with a sudden, dramatic downward leap and base repetitions in m. 59; in *Douleur,* the transition is marked by a less marked movement to a higher register and syncopated chords in m.

106. The repetitive triole motive in the right hand is replaced by the melody in Ballade. In Ballade, the *tempo primo–accelerando* begins from a lower register and rises gradually. Otherwise the homophonic sections resemble each other. In *Douleur*, the climax at the end of *tempo primo–accelerando* is instructed to "stop suddenly" to a pause. Equally, *Douleur*'s ending has the instruction "stop suddenly together", whereas Ballade has the instruction to leave the pedal down for an additional fermata measure.

The largest difference between *Douleur* and Ballade is that *Douleur*'s beginning until m. 27 is left out from Ballade entirely. *Douleur* begins with the soprano's first half-spoken and then sung repetition of the words "remords" (remorse) and "le remords me brûle" (remorse burns me), with "remords" being repeated to a dotted rhythm with alternating pitches of g^1 and $f\#^1$ in the piano's right hand, the left hand counterpointing it with trioles and then 16th-notes in h and c^1. Ballade's first *meno mosso* with its dissipation leads to a fairly quiet, polyphonic section in mm. 51–58. The corresponding section in *Douleur*, mm. 81–105 is 17 measures longer and more agitated. Repeated 16th-note $c\#^1$'s (mm. 79–89) are followed by a sudden *f*-chord, syncopated chords (mm. 90–98) and repeated 32nd-notes in $a\#^1$ (mm. 99–104). *Douleur*'s *tempo primo–agitato* (mm. 126–132) after the culmination has repetitive 32nd-notes in $a\#^1$, while Ballade's corresponding passage (mm. 80–94) is calmer and more polyphonic, containing slower tremolos. In Ballade, the dotted motive appears more fleetingly apart from the syncopations of the *tempo primo–accelerando* -section, and the fast repetitions appear more passingly, low in the base at the transitional sections in mm. 11, 28 and 59, and in the "soprano" in mm. 14 and 19–20.

4. SAARIAHO'S BALLADE AS A NARRATIVE OF A GUILTY AND TRAUMA

4.1 Guilt and ambiguity in *Douleur*'s lyrics

Parakilas (1992, 37 & 39) sees that the written or sung ballad represents a structure of a guilty conscience, and that this structure would be wordlessly translated to Chopin's Ballades. Similarly, I interpret *Douleur*'s lyrics (Appendix 1) as a programmatic pre-text to Ballade. Even if the lyrics do not represent a ballad in genre, they share similarities with it in some respects. The most central common factor is that also *Douleur* has a guilty conscience as its subject matter. According to Parakilas (ibid., 37), the guilt does not belong to any character within a ballad story, but in *Douleur*, the guilt does belong to the protagonist of the lyrics. The lyrics depict a woman who is remorseful of a past encounter with a man. The protagonist exclaims her remorse numerous times, to the point of obsession, while recounting piece by piece the event that is the source of her anguish. The phrase "le remors me brûle" is repeated in every verse. The events of Romantic ballads often situate at night-time (ibid.), and this is true also for *Douleur*: "Cette nuit-là, je m'en souviens/La lune était pleine" (That night, I remember/The moon was full). There are three temporal stages in the lyrics: the present moment, the process of the woman getting closer to the man, and the night the encounter took place. Like in some ballads, in the song's present the act of defiance has already been committed (Parakilas 1992, 35). However, there are continuous shifts between the past and the present. The woman's memorizing and storytelling are interrupted by repeating declarations of remorse. When the protagonist expresses a desire to have spent one more day and night with the man, the phrase is interrupted by "remorse burns me", highlighting the contradiction in her emotions. The narrative technique of the present agony piercing and overcoming the memories represents how painful they are, and how gravely and obsessively they are repented. The remorse is an obsessive thought that won't leave the protagonist alone and that has no resolve.

Douleur's lyrics deal with the main character's activity or passivity in relation to what happened, describing it as ambiguous. The woman accounts the stages of her advancements with a man, in one phrase declaring how her body directed itself towards

him, but in another stating how her body betrayed her: “Mon corps a dérivé vers lui/Mon corps ne m'a pas obéi” (My body drifted to him/My body did not obey me). The character accounts the happenings as if driven by a strange force, where her body is the active agent, and she herself is passive. This reflects the ballad process: according to Claude Bremond (1973, cited in Parakilas 1992, 35), in ballads a pronounced, single shift changes the principal character’s role from an active agent to a passive recipient. This also represents a cartesian understanding of the mind and the body as separate. The inability to control one’s own body further reflects an understanding that the encounter was as if dictated by fate, recalling the way a ballad represents the irresistible force of the natural process (Parakilas 1992, 35). The other songs of *Quatre Instant* deal with similar questions. The consecutive third song, *Parfum de L’instant*, likewise describes a paradoxical split of mind and body. It portrays a moment of lovemaking, where the protagonist tells how she is embraced by a lover, but how she simultaneously is imagining him, the moment already becoming a memory. The passivity of the main character is likewise reflected in *Attente*, where she describes herself as a boat drifting on a river, with a lover waiting at the other bank, as well as with the last song, *Résonances*, which is a combination of the verses, as well as the musical material, of the previous songs.

The split experience also reflects Freud’s (2005) conception of the uncanny as something both familiar and horrifyingly strange in the shape of the double, a *Dobbelgänger*, who self-observes and self-criticizes the ego (Freud 2005, 49). The protagonist’s body that does the action is projected outside of itself with repressed material (Välimäki 2005, 272). The body represents the threatening side of the protagonist: the desire she feels towards the man. The insistent repetitions of the word “remords”, as well as the close to identical repetitions of phrases, represent repetition compulsion[6] which Freud (2005, 57; Freud 2015, 30) interprets to exemplify both the uncanny and the death drive. The death drive is an inherent conservative instinct of all living to restore an earlier state of things (Freud 2015, 30 & 37). The death instincts would oppose the life instincts, which come apparent in the sexual instincts that

[6] Maalouf’s written lyrics do not show all the repetitions of the song. For example the beginning’s repeated words “le remord” and “le remords me brûle” are not included in the written version.

propagate the prolongation of life (ibid., 37). The repetition compulsion in *Douleur* could be interpreted as dysphoric in its representation of the death drive.

Douleur's lyrics reveal at least one reason for the regret of the woman: "J'aurais tellement voulu le garder/Le remords me brûle/Un jour de plus, une autre nuit/Il ne m'a pas obéi" (I would have so much wanted to keep him/Remorse burns me/One more day, one more night/He did not obey me). The word "obéi" ("obey") is accentuated in the phrase, as the soprano sings it at the moment of the downward leap. She repents what has happened furiously, but paradoxically wishes to have been able to spend at least one more night with him. According to Freud (2005, 55), anxiety caused by repression can be horrifying enough to render irrelevant whether the source of horror would originally cause anxiety or not. In fact, the protagonist's wish to have had more time with the man suggests that it is more the aftermath of the event that is the source of her anguish. His rejection has rendered the memories of the encounter painful and regrettable. The sense of guilt stems from having a sexual encounter with a man who then abandoned her. It stems from the desire she feels towards a reprehensible action, lying in the conflict between the rational and the physical and their opposing desires.

The protagonist's relationship with the man could be interpreted as the ballads' act of defiance against the nature of things (Parakilas 1992, 36), and thus be the source of guilt. Parakilas (ibid., 35) writes that "the act of defiance that begins the process carries within itself the seed of its failure"; the guilt structure of the ballad would already be manifest in the act of defiance. Because of this, resistance is futile. The guilt and powerlessness of the protagonist is present in the act of defiance, which can be deducted by the strong reluctance and ambiguity experienced by the woman as she approaches the man. The lyrics reflect a sense of powerlessness in relation to what happened, just as Parakilas (ibid., 37) defines the ballad process's guilt to manifest as powerlessness. It might as well be that the sense of powerlessness in the face of the events is something that the woman connects to them only afterwards. The ambivalence could be interpreted as a way of distancing oneself of the events, and an attempt to lessen the sense of responsibility and thus the guilt of the encounter. Character's consciences are not decisive factors in ballads (Parakilas 1992, 37); like in ballads, *Douleur*'s protagonist's ambivalence did nothing to prevent the action that is the source of guilt. According to

Parakilas (ibid., 37) and his interpretation of Bremond's theory, the protagonists become passive after their act of defiance, and do not redeem themselves by repenting. One could conclude that as a psychological description, the guilt itself is the reckoning of the protagonist.

4.2 Ballade as a guilt's seep to surface

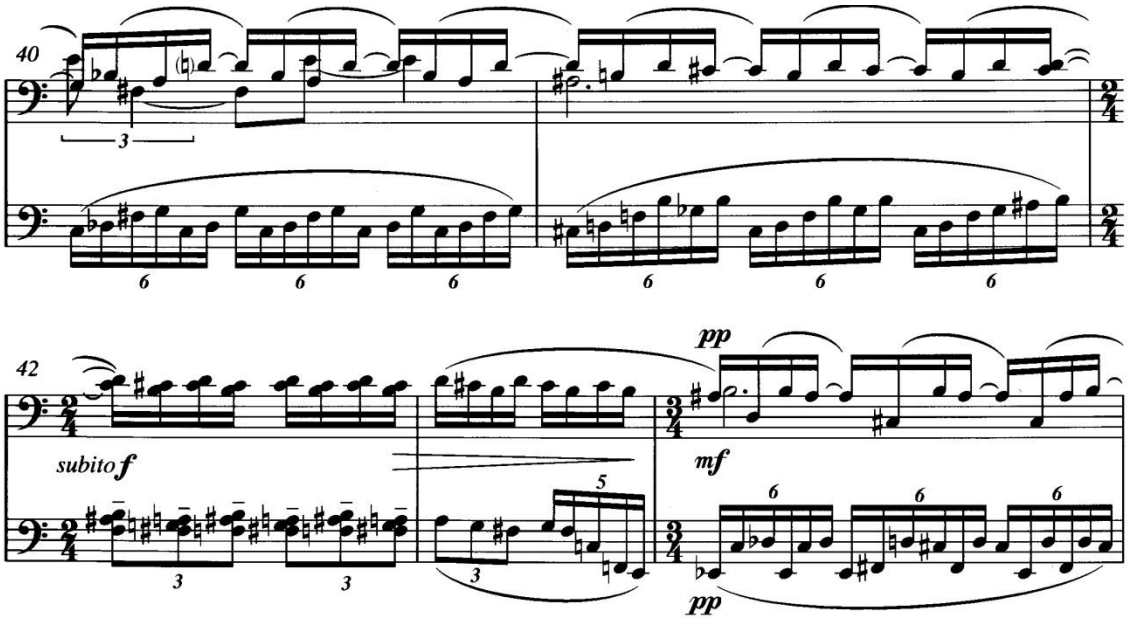
Some of Ballade's repeated gestures, even if general hallmarks of Saariaho's compositional style, obtain a particular meaning when observed from the perspective of Parakilas's ballad process. The dramatic downward leap followed by frantic repetitions and/or an *arpeggio* or a *glissando* in m. 11, m. 28, m. 59 and m. 94 function as transitional gestures to new passages. They lead to the polyphonic passage following the introduction, the two homophonic *meno mosso*, and the homophonic *tempo primo*–*accelerando*. In Chopin's Ballades, Parakilas (1992, 70) interprets the transitions to represent moments of a guilty conscience that suddenly recognizes a suppressed memory. In Saariaho's Ballade, they obtain the same signification. Even if the transitions are not executed as Chopin's technique of thematic convergence (ibid., 69), their function is the same as Chopin's. The downward leap of a major seventh is a dramatic moment, as if an exclamation of terror or a revelation. The leaps end the previous musical material and lead, most abruptly in m. 59, to new one. The downward leaps are moments that remind of the guilt and its cause, setting the narration in motion again.

The transitions could be interpreted as instances of *peripeteia*, reversals of fortune that signify suffering (Klein 2005, 120–122).[7] Always presented in a changed context, the gestures find a parallel in a story where meaning accumulates over time. The first instance of the widening gesture and downward leap contains the melody mostly hidden (m.11), whereas the last one presents it most bare (m. 94), representing the way the anguish of the protagonist becomes all the more apparent throughout the piece. As in a narrative ballade, Ballade evolves without repeating sections identically, just as a story

[7] In reference to Witold Lutoslawski's (1913–1994) Symphony No. 4, Klein (2005, 120.) interprets the disjunctions in the music to represent instances of *peripeteia*, reversal. "From this moment of suffering, one looks both backward and forward to find the expressive logic that in plots the *peripeteia*, joining it to the other musical events in a chain of causation that makes time human." (Ibid.)

continually develops (Parakilas 1992, 282). The texturally alternating sections are repeated, but with variation, which could also be seen as a loose reference to the stanzaic form of literary ballads. Ballade's structure is roughly symmetrical, and more so than *Douleur*, centering around the *tempo primo–accelerando*: Parakilas (ibid., 47) states, referring to Buchan (1972, 133), that building material around a crucial central point or stanza is distinctive of literary ballads.

The gestures, apart from the first instance in m. 11, are followed by more homophonic, linear sections, with augmented rhythmic activity and distinct, continuous voice leading. Following Kramer's (1988, 409) delineation, their linearity renders them more narrative. The passages could be interpreted to represent instances of reminiscing. According to Parakilas (1992, 68–70), the modulating processes in Chopin's Ballades would resemble a reminiscing of a memory. Saariaho's Ballade's *meno mosso* -passages could equally be interpreted as such instances, even if they do not contain modulation in the traditional sense, but rather constant delicate shifts in harmony. Nevertheless, they create a sense of mystery and are even indicated as *misterioso*, the second time in *Douleur*'s versions as *misterioso ma appassionato*. The corresponding part in *Douleur*'s lyrics depict remembering explicitly using expressions "that night" and "I remember": "Cette nuit-la, je m'en souviens/La lune était pleine" (That night, I remember/The moon was full). The fragile, transparent texture is combined with a lyrical melody, which adds up to a sensation of nostalgia and remembrance. The lower voice is in sextuple meter. Also Chopin's Ballades are in sextuple meter, which Parakilas (1992, 55) interprets to allude to night, dream, love and song, implicating its dreamlike structure; as he states, ballad is as if a dream made up by a guilty conscience (ibid., 38). Overall, the passage creates a dreamlike feel. In the first *meno mosso*, the momentary reverie could be interpreted impossible to maintain because of a sudden, horrific memory or revelation piercing the protagonist's mind, which is represented by the two, violent *f*-interruptions (Example 3). In the corresponding part, the lyrics describe a door opening and closing for the man. Thus, the gestures have an iconic meaning of representing knocks on a door. Additionally, they represent heartbeats; their polyrhythm of trioles against fourth-notes sound as if two hearts beating together. Symbolically, the interruptions represent the man's intrusion to the woman's physical and metaphorical space.



Example 3. Interrupting gesture in mm. 42–43 within the homophonic passage. © 2009 Chester Music Ltd.

As stated, also the *tempo primo–accelerando*, like the two *meno mosso*, can represent reminiscing. The listener is led to it by a similar downward leap gesture as in the *meno mosso,* and it equally begins at a low register, the texture divided between a continuous, low accompaniment and a vocal line. Because of this, it reminds the listener of the *meno mosso* -passage. In the last *meno mosso* –passage there are no interruptive gestures, and the texture continually proceeds toward one direction, as there is a constant *diminuendo* and movement to the treble register. The listener is once again brought back to the same material and reminded of the previous instances, but this time the event is a more resolutive synthesis of the two previous passages because of its gradual and linear vanishing.

According to Parakilas (1992, 39) things would not finish the way they began in a ballad process, but would nevertheless end to a return or a restoration. Saariaho's Ballade undergoes changes over time, becoming more predominant homophonic and less fragmentary. The second *meno mosso* is opposite to a whirlwind of musical reckoning (ibid., 287) found in Chopin's ballades, but as noted nevertheless has a

resolutive function, and the brief *coda* nevertheless offers a tumultuous end to the music. The *coda* is a return to the beginning's upward *arpeggio*. Instead of landing to a long sound after the *arpeggio* like in the beginning, the storm just aggravates, with the final release of a diatonic downward *glissando*. Also in Saariaho's Ballade, things do not end the way they began, but there is a restoration of the beginning. However, Saariaho's Ballade does not tell the story in one sweep in the way Chopin's did; it does not have any general pattern of ever-increasing momentum from beginning to end (ibid., 54). Nevertheless, the almost omnipresent, vocal melody binds its narration together. *Douleur*'s close connection to Ballade functions also as a reference to the birth of the genre. As Chopin's Ballades are characteristic because of their unending sounding voice (ibid., 56), so is melodicity a poignant feature of Saariaho's Ballade. This change of medium is not uncommon in the history of ballades (ibid., 117). Parakilas (ibid., 58) sees that a narrative voice explicitly asserts itself in some instances in Chopin's Ballades. The opening *arpeggio* and the solemn phrase in mm. 4–7 could be seen to represent moments of an impersonal narrative voice beginning a story. The opening's and the ending's *arpeggi* and *glissando* remind of a narrator's stanzas that can frame a ballad (ibid., 47).

Besides the transitions and interruptions, Ballade's other repetitions, reappearing gestures and sudden elements could be interpreted to represent guilt as a recurring of a memory. The recurrence of a memory leads to a sensation of guilt – in fact, it is the sensation of guilt that forces the memory to recur. In this sense, Ballade represents guilt both at the level of singular gestures, longer passages and overall structure. Besides representing an insistent memory, these gestures have their own, historically established significations which will be observed more closely in the following chapter.

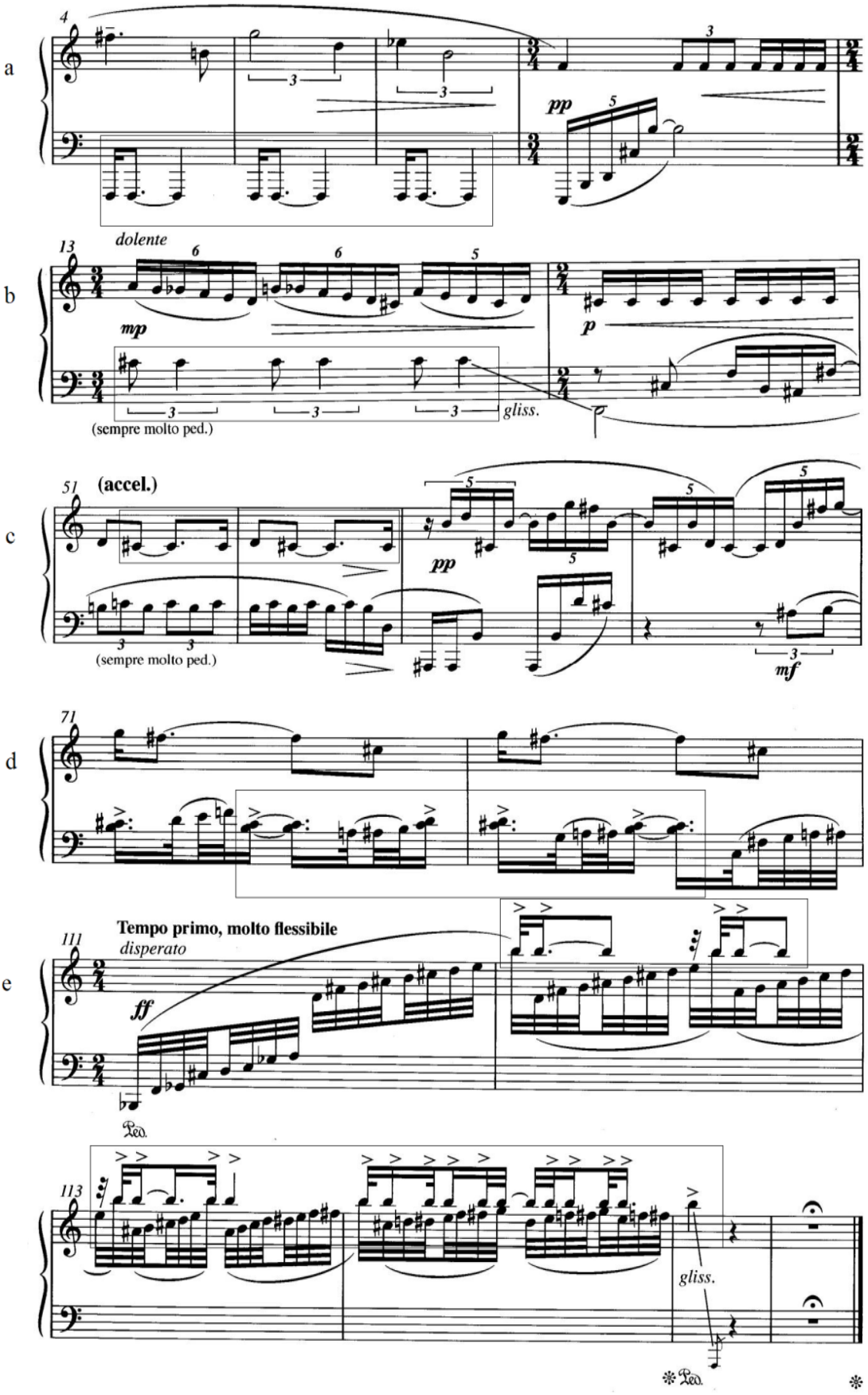
4.3. Ballade's *ombra* gestures as representations of guilt, fear and desire

Some of Ballade's repeated gestures, such as the *tremolandi*, *glissandi*, fast repetitions and dotted rhythms, recall the historical compositional style of *ombra*. A distinctive feature of the climactic *tempo primo–accelerando* -section (mm. 60–77) is its dotted, syncopated rhythm. Dotted rhythms are noticeable also elsewhere in Ballade and *Douleur*. Even if having different variations, they resemble the rhythm of a heartbeat

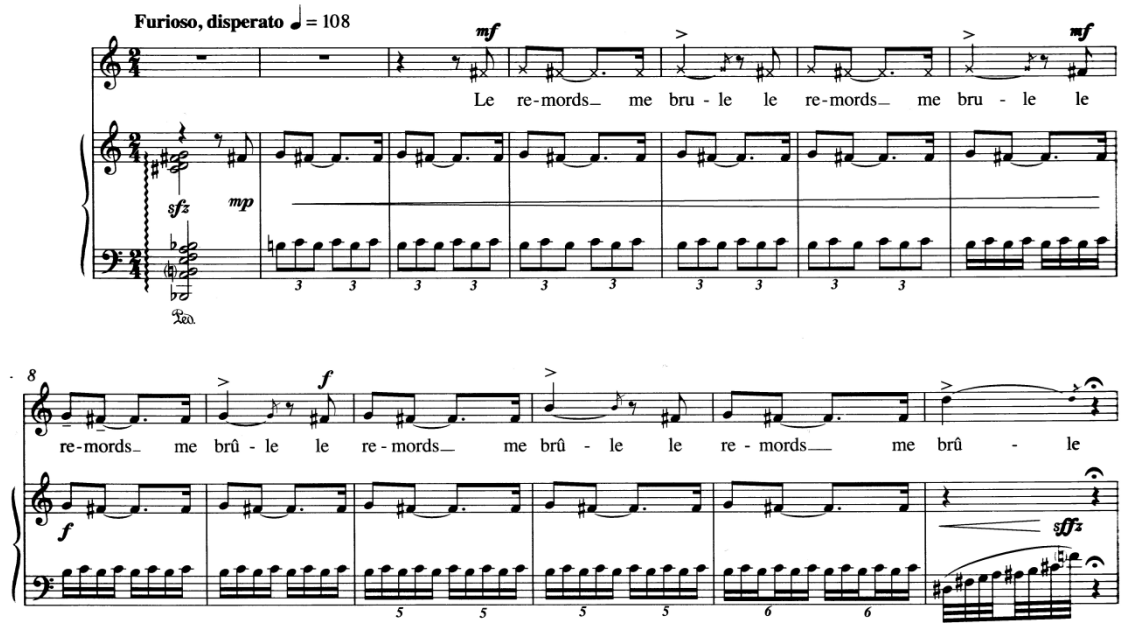
(Example 4). According to McClelland (ibid., 64), repeated notes were used in *ombra*, as they can raise a sense of imminent danger or approaching menace through the allusion to heartbeat or footsteps, as well as physically resonating with listeners when repeated at a lower frequency. Dotted rhythms and syncopations expressed fear and agitation in the suggestion of an irregular heartbeat (ibid., 103).

The dotted motive is more prominent in *Douleur*'s versions. As stated, *Douleur*'s beginning (Example 5), omitted from Ballade, consists of the soprano's initially half-spoken and then sung repetition of the words "remords" and "le remords me brûle", with "remords" being repeated to a dotted rhythm with alternating pitches of g^1 and $f\#^1$. The dotted motive is repeated like an echo in the piano's right hand, while the left hand plays a steady triole of alternating 8th-notes, gradually turning into faster sextuple-notes in m. 12. As the interruptive polyrhythmic gestures in the first *meno mosso*, the passage can be interpreted to represent two heartbeats, this time the lower faster than the higher. The accents and the rhythm of the dotted, repetitive motives follow the intonation of the word "remords". The rhythm is heard also later on as if sonically echoing the word. The motive and the phrase are related through direct mimesis: the motive audibly and externally imitates the text, which renders them related iconically, by resemblance (Stacey 1989, 22).

The dotted motive could be said to have left traces in Ballade. From an intertextual perspective, Ballade's dotted rhythms, too, echo the signification of remorse. Besides the *tempo primo–accelerando*, the motive has a fundamental role at the beginning of the work in mm. 4–6 (Example 5a), where three, slow consecutive heartbeats low at the base in F^1 accompany a declaring, angular melodic phrase in a bare, stagnant manner. The passage has more weight because it appears in the introduction, as compared to *Douleur*'s mm. 31–35. The beats recall, besides heartbeats, a Debussy-esque allusion to church bells, and create a sense of ominousness. Reflecting the impersonal narrator's voice, this "bells of fate" -passage could be seen as a moment that brings forth the music's theme of fear, guilt and judgement.



Example 4. Some of the heartbeat motives in Ballade. ©2009 Chester Music Ltd.



Example 5. The beginning of *Douleur*'s piano and soprano version. © 2004 Chester music Ltd.

Besides the dotted rhythm, Ballade contains fast repetitions of single pitches, which can be interpreted to represent agitated heartbeats. The mechanical repetition of musical material is one of *ombra*'s features (Klein 2005, 87). In Ballade, the fast repetitions appear more passingly than in *Douleur*, generally as quintole or sextuple 16th-notes in the base at the transitional sections in mm. 11, 28 and 59, and as 16th-notes in the "soprano" in mm. 14 and as triole 8th-notes in mm. 19–20.. *Douleur*'s mm. 79–89 99–104 and 126–132 contain fast, repetitive 16th- or 32nd-notes. Both the dotted rhythms and the fast repetitions could be interpreted to function as musical representations of the repetition compulsion, and find their counterpart in the repetitiveness of *Douleur*'s lyrics.

The repetition compulsion further manifests in Ballade and *Douleur* as interruptions and as ways in which the music at times seems to have difficulty moving forward. Ballade's movement is abruptly interrupted in two instances in the *meno mosso* -passages (Example 4), and after the second time it seems to have difficulty to regain its forward movement, ending up gradually dissolving. The downward leap in m. 59 appears abruptly, leading to the *tempo primo–accelerando*. In the *tempo primo–accelerando* the

music first has a clearer linear development even with the repetitive accompaniment, as there is a narrating, long-arching melody that gradually shifts to a higher register, while the dynamics gradually rise. Yet in mm. 69–74, the music continues to accelerate, but the melody remains to repeat the same short phrase, which in *Douleur* has the soprano repeating "le remords", again as if unable to move forward. The polyphonic section of mm. 14–24 contains particularly many repetitions of single pitches, as can be seen in the graphic following the heartbeat symbol, creating a lingering and static feel that doesn't seem to have any clear direction.

As mentioned, there are several *glissandi* and *arpeggi* in Ballade, some of them replacing *Douleur*'s descending *glissandi* in the voice. Descending *glissandi* were used to represent sighs, originating in the Italian madrigals to depict sighs of lovers (McClelland 2012, 98). In *ombra* music, sighs signify sorrow or despair and generally relate to heroines in distress (ibid.). The sigh also relates to the topic of *pianto* and the lament (Monelle 2000, 17). The dotted rhythm too, when a falling minor second, can further be interpreted to represent a sigh, as well as the melancholic, descending line in mm. 109–110. The three descending stepwise motives in Ballade's m. 13, a movement typical of *ombra*, could be interpreted as sighs; in the corresponding part in *Douleur* (m. 41), the soprano lets out an "ah…" sigh of a descending minor sixth which is marked *dolente*. The downward *glissandi* can also create an impression of sinking. In *Douleur* the downward movements appear as descending clusters in mm. 24–28 and 147–150. This *catabasis* gesture generally denotes death (Välimäki 2005, 278), aligning with the interpretation of the repetitions representing the death drive.

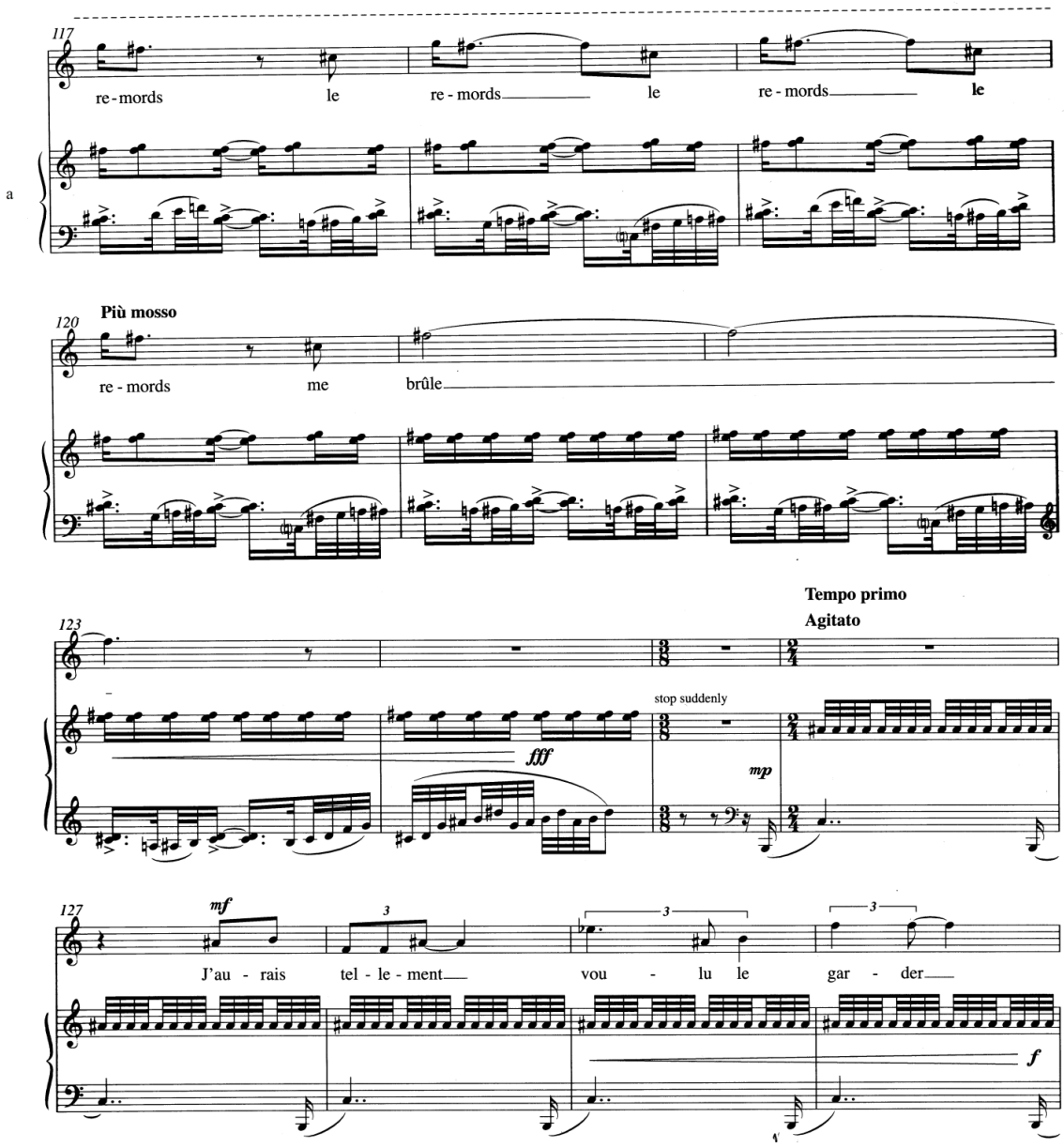
Douleur begins with a *sfz arpeggio* chord, and a rising *arpeggio* chord begins Ballade and its *coda*, and both the *tempo primo–accelerando* and the *coda* have fast, rising *arpeggi* figures in the left hand: scales and especially rising *arpeggi* can signify anger, exclamation and menace (1992, 299, quoted in McClelland 2012, 7). The use of *tremolandi* (McClelland 2012, 88) is common in *ombra*, and is found in some instances in Ballade. *Tremolandi* allude to the physical shaking of the body and typically express fear (ibid.). Most notably, the *tempo primo–accelerando* section ends with a long *tremolo* in mm. 73–78, corresponding with *Douleur*'s sustained "remords" exclamations

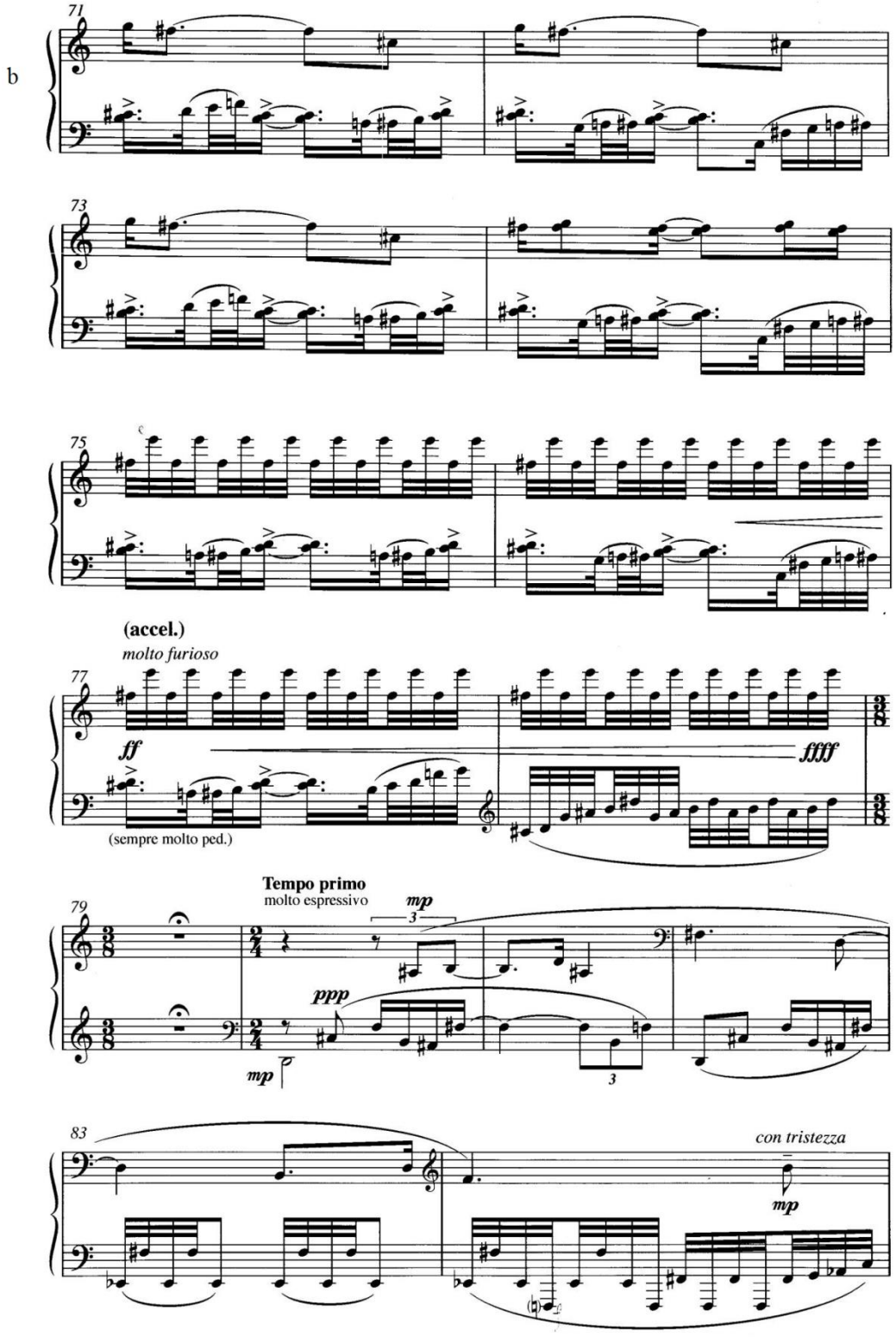
(Example 6). Ballade's following passage (mm. 83–92) is characterized by several slower, expressive *tremolandi* in the treble and in the base.

Sudden moments and pauses also appear in Ballade. In *ombra*, they are applied for dramatic effect (McClelland 2012, 119). Välimäki (2005, 267) interprets them to represent death and despair. Sudden, aggressive outbursts begin the work in all the analyzed versions, as if some kind of a horrific revelation or a memory piercing one's being. The sudden moments in Ballade include the beginning's *crescendo arpeggio*; as mentioned, the two moments of interrupting, loud *subito f* chords in m. 38 and m. 42; the arrival of a quick *crescendo* and a downward leap in mm. 58–59; the stopping of the movement at the culmination in m. 78, the repetitions, *glissandi* or *arpeggi* in mm. 11–12, 28 and 94 and perhaps most unexpectedly the tumultuous *coda* at m. 111 after a long and ceasing passage.

As seen in the graphic (Example 1), the density of the appearance of the aforementioned musical gestures changes over the course of Ballade. From the beginning up until the end of the *tempo primo–accelerando* section in m. 79, the dotted gestures and repeated rhythms are predominant, but after that they only reappear in the *coda*. The following section of mm. 80–94 instead is the only one with *tremolandi*, apart from mm. 75–78. The *glissandi* and *arpeggi* appear mostly in the first two sections, if not for the transition to the last *meno mosso* and the *coda*. One can deduct from this that the gestures are not only communicative in themselves, but have a role in shaping the character of the individual passages and marking distinctions between them. Combined with their transitional function, the repetitions, *tremolandi*, *glissandi* and *arpeggi* shape Ballade's musical narration and overall form. The gestures in Saariaho's Ballade have a narrative function also because they often appear as musically marked (Hatten 1994, 37).

Tremolandi, *glissandi* and heartbeats represent fear, and their origin as musical conventions lie in their depiction of a person's physical responses to danger (McClelland 2012, 119). Yet, considering that *Douleur* tells of a sexual encounter, the


117
re - mords le re - mords le re - mords le
a
120
Più mosso
re - mords me brûle
Tempo primo
Agitato
123
stop suddenly
fff
mp
127
mf
J'au - rais tel - le - ment vou - lu le gar - der
f



Example 6. The culmination points of Douleur and Ballade. © 2004 & 2009 Chester Music Ltd.

gestures can simultaneously represent the protagonist's physical arousal. Particularly the gradually intensifying, highly repetitive middle section *tempo primo–accelerando* creates a menacing feel because of the repetitive base accompaniment in a diminished B harmony and the gradual buildup of tension. It could be interpreted as a moment where the torment of the excruciating memory, as well as desire, have seeped to surface and cannot be suppressed any longer. Because the event is remorsed, remembrances of the moment's pleasure entwine with most intense guilt and fear. Previously the heartbeat gestures have appeared fleetingly, but in this dramatic section the accelerating, syncopated rhythm is continuous. According to McClelland (ibid.), syncopation is more powerful than dotted rhythms in creating the illusion of an irregular, excited heartbeat, as they threaten the regularity of the main beats. The corresponding part in *Douleur*'s lyrics alludes to sex, as the woman tells that her body drifted to the man, not obeying her: "Mon corps a dérivé vers lui/Mon corps ne m'a pas obéi". The line is followed by repetitions of "le re-mords", rhythmically aligning with the accompaniment's rhythm and with accents on the "*re*" -syllables on the strong beats. In both Ballade's and *Douleur*'s score, the syncopated rhythm is emphasized by marked accents. This rhythmic moment could iconically allude to the act of lovemaking. The passage, because of its intensity, vocality and repetitive chords, associates to the Romantic style of *Stile Appassionato*. As Janine Dickensheets (2012, 109) writes:

> Operatically derived melodies are often written in octaves (although a single soaring line can create the same effect) and are underscored by throbbing, repeated chords – most frequently in eighth-note or triplet patterns – that represent the pounding heartbeat of barely suppressed passion.

The discussed topics of *Douleur* and Ballade, particularly the *pianto*, the *catabasis* and the heartbeats, are likewise a part of the musical language of Saariaho's operas *L'Amour de Loin* and *Adriana Mater* (Hautsalo 2011, 107–129). The ambivalence represented in *Douleur* and Ballade demonstrates a nuanced and fluid way of attaching meanings to the topics. Everett (2015, 89) states in regards to *Adriana Mater* that "[its] musical semes carry psychological resonances, but resist fixed topical identification". Ballade represents both guilt, fear and desire. In this way, the ambiguity apparent in *Douleur*'s lyrics support a more layered interpretation of the meanings of Ballade's gestures and passages.

Ballade could be interpreted to represent both the euphoric and the dysphoric. John Richardson (1998, 166) suggests that Bernard Hermann's (1911–1975) music in Alfred Hitchcock's (1899–1980) films *Vertigo* (1958) and *Psycho* (1960) would represent the death drive as something both feared and desired, following Kristeva's (1986) definition of the *chora*. The *chora*, according to Kristeva (ibid., 93), is a "non-expressive totality marked by drives". Kristeva (ibid., 95) does not interpret Freud's death drive as simply detrimental: the *chora* is a site of pre-symbolic functions, where drives are ambiguous in being both assimilating and destructive. This ambivalent definition of the death drive offers an appropriate interpretation to the ambivalence apparent in *Douleur*'s lyrics and its musical coding in Ballade. The ambivalence and the repetitions represent the death drive as a double-edged sword of something eagerly desired but potentially dangerous. Further, the intertwining of pleasure and pain can be seen to represent unattainable erotic love as a type of masochism, which according to Freud (2015, 46–47) represents the death instinct. In masochism, the subject directs sadism upon him/herself, which leads to regression (ibid.). Adapting these interpretations to Parakilas's ballad process, the ambivalence could be seen to represent both the challenging of the natural order as the desire the protagonist experiences, as well as the punishment that inevitably ensues in its depiction of guilt, fear and menace.

4.4 Narrating a trauma

Ballade's repetitions and interruptions open a window to further intertextual interpretations, offering a complementary reading of Ballade as trauma narration. The repetitions could be seen to represent the way the remorsed event has taken complete hold of the protagonist's thoughts. The repetitions, sudden moments, and the lyric's fragmentary way of recounting suggest that protagonist would in fact have been traumatized by the event. In this interpretation, the memories do not only lead to guilt's seep to surface, but represent flashbacks of something traumatic. The sudden bursts of *Douleur* and Ballade, such as the upward *arpeggi*, descending *glissandi*, and the *f*-interruptions and the *coda*, are as if frights that wake one from a nightmare. Referring to Freud (2015, 7), Caruth (2016, 66) sees that not only the nightmare but the experience of waking from the nightmare, a fright, or a waking into consciousness, is connected to

reliving the trauma. Waking itself would reflect the incomprehensibility of one's own survival: one has survived without knowing it (ibid., 65). Stories of trauma consist of a double telling, where the unbearable nature of both the event and its survival become an oscillation between the crisis of death the crisis of life (ibid., 8–9). Breaks and repressive distortions can be interpreted as defense mechanisms for coping with a traumatic experience, such as isolation or turning against self (Välimäki 2005, 281).

Douleur and Ballade also represent what Brison (1999, 41) characterizes as fragmentation within past, present and future. As noted, the *meno mosso* -passages create a sense of remembrance. According to the lyrics, time has passed between the event and the present moment. The protagonist speaks of "that night" and how she remembers the full moon, as if time would have blurred the memory of other details: "Cette nuit-là, je m'en souviens/La lune était pleine" (That night, I remember/The moon was full). That memory is intruded by something painful, represented by the two *f*-interruptions: trauma renders the event to be experienced as if it were an acute, present anguish. As noted, the *meno mosso* have a dreamlike quality, with a softly rumbling accompaniment; according to Caruth (2016, 62–63), the return of a traumatizing event can appear as in a dream, like a waking memory, representing a break in the mind's experience of time.

Douleur's lyrics also function as representations of a dissociative reaction, a central feature of trauma (Brison 1999, 41). As noted, the protagonist experiences an uncanny sensation of both observing the action and taking part in it. She accounts how she did not actually want to act the way she did, but her body nevertheless did. Interestingly, the protagonist repeatedly describes the remorse as if "burning" her: Caruth (ibid., 5) names "burning" as one of the four key figures that insistently recur in Freud's and other's psychoanalytical texts, alongside "departure", "falling" and "awakening". Trauma as "falling" could be detected in the *catabasis* gestures, and as "awakening" in the frights as described.

Another aspect of a traumatic experience that is represented in *Douleur*'s lyrics and that echoes in Ballade is its corporeal manifestations. Traumatic memories are somatic in type (Brison 1999, 42). In the lyrics, the protagonist refers to the body: her eyes, her body and his arms. As stated, Ballade's heartbeats, *glissandi* and *tremolandi* have an

aspect of physicality, as they represent physical responses to fear (McClelland 2012, 119). A racing heart, a recurring motive in Ballade in the shape of fast bass repetitions and the *tempo primo–accelerando* syncopations, is mentioned as one of trauma's physiological symptoms (Brison 1999, 42). Shifts between numbness and an alerted state that Culbertson (1995, 174) describes can be detected in Ballade's major events. For example, the dramatic *tempo primo–accelerando* with its accelerating tension and heartbeat rhythm could be seen to represent an alerted state, and the surrendered, unsure, seeking hovering after the cutting end a numbness or a powerlessness. The downward leap, a moment when the character is seized by a terrifying memory, is followed by a frantic repetition in the base and/or a fast *arpeggio* or *glissando*, which could be interpreted to represent a physically agitated reaction to the memory. This depiction of trauma as a state of powerlessness also connects to Parakilas's (1992, 37) definition of the ballad as a structure of powerlessness.

Douleur could alternately be interpreted to represent sexual violence. The protagonist has ambivalent feelings towards the man, and is left in a devastated state. In the rape scene of *Adriana Mater*, piano's rhythms represent Tsargo's knocks on Adriana's door (Everett 2015, 102), just as there are knocks on a door in *Douleur* that musically appear as violent intrusions. As stated, Ballade's rising *arpeggi* in the *tempo primo–accelerando*'s last moments, at the beginning and in the end can signify anger, exclamation and menace. The *accelerando* is marked *poco a poco più furioso*, the last two measures *molto furioso*. The abrupt ending follows the extremely loud, *ffff* ending. The extremely loud volume and rapid movement is suddenly stopped and renders the middle section even more agitated. Its suddenness is equally another moment of freight that represents the reliving of trauma (Caruth 2016, 66). The ending of the passage without resolution represents the depth of the protagonist's hurt as an inability to verbalize and come to a conclusion about her torment (Välimäki 2005, 281). However, the ambivalence and desire represented in *Douleur*'s lyrics do not support the interpretation of the scene as outright violence, but offer a more nuanced and layered interpretation.

According to Meelberg (2006,190), it is very difficult to create music that would lack musical tense, and thus music that would function as a representation of trauma.

Following this line of thought, it becomes dubious to claim that Ballade's music would be a musical representation of the psychological condition of trauma; its narrative strategies are in no way extreme, and as concluded in regards to its repetitions and melodicity, it clearly contains a musical tense as defined by Meelberg. In fact, is not the trauma itself that is narrated in *Douleur* and that has left its musical traces in Ballade, but it is rather the attempt to narrate that is depicted in the works. As noted, Ballade's repetitions and interruptions are instances representative of contemporary music's metanarrativity (Meelberg 1999, 206); simultaneously, they obtain the meaning of attempting to narrate a trauma. The event has rendered the protagonist from a subject to a powerless object, as in a ballad story; the woman experiences herself as passive and unable to control herself despite her consciously wanting the opposite. The event has elicited a trauma that the subject is attempting to streamline into a narrative, but struggles with it as the interruptive exclamations, repetitions and inabilities to go forward demonstrate.

According to Caruth (2016, 64), in trauma it is paradoxically the missing of the experience itself that leads to shock and repetition. However, even compulsive repetition, while being deteriorating to its sufferer, is not only a mechanical process (ibid., 132). "Repetition is never simply a representation nor its absence but rather the re-enactment – and potential erasure – of a history that refuses recognition." (Ibid.) Ballade's repetitions represent an attempt to claim one's survival as one's own (ibid., 66). Brison (1999, 42) states that an act of narrating traumatic memories to others in turn empowers the survivors, and a speech act gives shape and a temporal order to the recalled events (ibid., 40). For the victim to gain mastery over the traumatic event requires its telling and retelling, to become the subject instead of the torture's objectifying speech (ibid., 48). Sturken (1999, 235) describes this therapeutic process as "narrative integration that produces the memory of the traumatic event. It is when they become full-blown narratives that these memories tell stories of blame and guilt." As is evident in the graphic (Example 1), the narrativizing process is shown in how the music becomes more linear gradually; the repetitive heartbeat gestures first appear constantly, but after they find their bare exposition in the *tempo primo–accelerando* section, they reappear only at the end. The beginning is polyphonic and fragmentary, with constant

alterations in dynamics, figurations and register and several *glissandi*, but further on the music becomes more poignantly melodic and predominantly homophonic, giving an impression of being more narrative. The second *meno mosso* is more linear than the first. It sustains its dreamlike state as it does not have any interruptive gestures like the first *meno mosso*; no piercing memories of the past. As noted in relation to Ballade's representation of guilt, also the downward leaps are presented gradually more distinguished: the suffering of the protagonist finds a clearer expression throughout the work. In this way, both Ballade's repetitions and its increased linearity could be interpreted to represent the protagonist's attempt of gaining mastery over a traumatic event that she experienced to have passively received.

As belatedness is characteristic of trauma, one could argue that the only way to depict trauma is to depict its aftermath. Caruth (2016, 18–19) states that trauma is evident only in relation to another time and place. The now-moment of *Douleur*'s lyrics *is* the site of trauma and the only way for the protagonist to attempt to grasp its source. *Douleur* is more anguished and contains more insistent repetitions than Ballade. Also on an intertextual level, *Douleur* and Ballade represent the narrativizing process of trauma: the protagonist's torment has become less acute over time. Yet the protagonist is not entirely freed from her torment, as Ballade's slow fading into silence could be interpreted to indicate. The tumultuous *coda* shows that the release is temporary, and that she is thrown back into her internal storm. As Brison (1999, 43) describes the helplessness experienced by the victim: "Traumatic flashbacks immobilize the body by rendering the will as useless as it is in a nightmare in which one desperately tries to flee, but remains frozen."

5. CONCLUSIONS

Following Meelberg's definition of narrativity, Ballade is a narrative work. It consists of discrete events and closures. Focusing on Ballade's significant events was purposeful, as it has texturally distinct passages that divide between polyphony and homophony. Ballade's form is fairly symmetrical, with a point of greatest tension, the *tempo primo–accelerando*, at its center. The beginning is most fragmentary, and over time the composition becomes more homophonic and thus linear and narrative. Following Kramer's delineation, Ballade represents nondirected linearity. Meelberg's statement that repeated gestures would add up to the narration of a work by creating a musical past, present and future finds its resonance in Ballade, because it has distinct transitional gestures that always appear in different contexts. Ballade's melodicity, homophonic sections and repeated gestures add up to its linearity. A recurring gesture that consists of a widening gesture, a downward leap and/or a *glissando*, *arpeggio* or a fast repetition, is of particular importance. While Ballade does not base on tonal progression, it has other continuities that support a narrative reading.

Ballade and *Douleur* were fruitfully and purposefully analyzed together, exemplifying the way the texts are permeated by one another. The inclusion of *Douleur* to Ballade's analysis supports the interpretation of Ballade as a representation of guilt and trauma. While *Douleur*'s lyrics do not represent the ballade genre, they nevertheless resonate with the ballad process's theme. *Douleur*'s lyrics represent a protagonist's ambiguous relation to a remorsed sexual encounter with a man. The protagonist experiences herself as a double, because the desiring body is seen as threatening. This represents a sense of powerlessness that characterizes the ballad process. The protagonist's experienced passivity recalls the ballad's principal character's shift from an active agent to a passive recipient. The relationship with the man could be interpreted as the ballads' act of defiance against the nature of things and thus be the source of guilt. Psychologically, the guilt itself is the reckoning of the protagonist. The lyrics are highly repetitive and have constant shifts between the remembered past and present agony, which emphasizes the protagonist's experience of pain and guilt.

Applying *Douleur*'s lyrics to Ballade's interpretation could be criticized by claims that lyrics and music do not communicate meanings in a similar manner. Several parallels between how the story is narrated literally and communicated musically were nevertheless discovered. The analysis proves that the theme of the song is presented in the narrative strategies of the music at various levels. The ballad process is exemplified in Saariaho's Ballade in its transitions, *meno mosso* and *tempo primo–accelerando* -passages, ending and overall form. The downward leaps function as transitions to new sections, which connects them to the function that transitions have in Chopin's ballades: they represent guilt as a painful memory that has seeped to surface. The gestures lead to *meno mosso* and *tempo primo–accelerando* -passages that represent a reminiscing of a memory. In the first *meno mosso* the nostalgic dream is impossible to maintain because of a horrific memory, which is represented by two *f*-interruptions. The ballad process is represented in Saariaho's Ballade also in how things end differently than how they began, but with a restoration of the beginning: Ballade becomes more linear over time, the second *meno mosso* being synthesis and reminder of the first *meno mosso* and the *tempo primo–accelerando*, but has a more resolutive function, and Ballade's *coda* opens with an upward *arpeggio* like the beginning. Saariaho's Ballade nevertheless differs from the ballad process in that it does not gradually build momentum from beginning to end.

The theme of guilt also resonates at the level of Ballade's individual gestures that have their historically established meanings as representatives of the *ombra* style. Analyzing *ombra* aspects in a contemporary composition could be criticized as anachronistic. However, as *ombra* devices represent human responses to fear and other emotions in an identifiable manner through their iconicism, they can continue to communicate with the contemporary listener. Ballade's many *ombra* gestures, such as the dotted heartbeat rhythms, fast repetitions, *tremolandi*, *arpeggi* and *glissandi*, represent fear and menace, aligning with the ballad's theme of guilt and punishment. The *glissandi* further associate to the topic of *pianto*, and the downward movements can be further interpreted as *catabasis* gestures that signify death. The gestures' importance to Ballade's narration is underlined by how their density and appearance varies over the course of Ballade, and how they often have a transitional function, which renders them musically marked.

While *Douleur* and Ballade are greatly similar, some of *Douleur*'s passages of dotted rhythms and fast repetitions have been omitted from Ballade. In Ballade the heartbeat motives and fast repetitions appears nevertheless at structurally important moments: the introduction, the culminating *tempo primo–accelerando* -passage and the transitional sections. In *Douleur*'s beginning, the instrumental dotted gesture accompanies the word's pronunciation "remords", and intertextually interpreted, the dotted motive signifies remorse also in Ballade. The lyric's and the music's repetitions could also be interpreted to represent the death drive as a repetition compulsion. This further manifests in the way the music occasionally seems to have difficulty to move forward. Ballade's more passing use of repetitions and contemplative playing instructions create an impression that Ballade would represent a retrospection of something more acutely experienced in *Douleur*.

Considering *Douleur*'s lyrics, the *ombra* gestures attain plural significations in Ballade. As *Douleur* tells of erotic passion, the heartbeats, *tremolandi* and *glissandi* can also represent physical arousal and desire. The climactic *tempo primo–accelerando* -passage musically associates to Romantic *Stile Appassionato*'s representation of suppressed passion. The passage could be interpreted as a moment where both fear and desire find their barest expression. The intertwining of pleasure and pain can represent masochism. Further, as the relationship is both feared and desired, Ballade can be seen to represent the death drive as both dysphoric and euphoric as presented in Kristeva's theory of the *chora*. In this way, the desire aligns with the ballad process's attempt to challenge natural order, while guilt and fear represent the inevitability of the reckoning.

Ballade's repetitions and sudden moments prompted another reading of it as trauma narration. The sudden interruptions, stoppages and beginnings, bursts, *glissandi* and *arpeggi* can be interpreted as frights that wake one from a nightmare and connect to reliving a trauma. Trauma intermingles the past, present and future: the dreamlike music and remembrance of the first *meno mosso* tell of time having passed, but the passage is interrupted by the *f*-gestures, which renders the past present. The passages can represent the way trauma returns as a dream. Further, Ballade's repetitions represent the repetition compulsion distinctive of a traumatic event. In *Douleur*, the main character experiences

herself as passive and split in mind and body in relation to the events, reflecting a trauma survivor's dissociative reaction. The somatic symptoms of agitation and numbness that cause changing states of alertness can be detected in Ballade's texturally and dynamically alternating passages, and the fast base repetitions that follow the downward leap are as if physically agitated reactions to a memory.

While Ballade could be said to be metanarrative in the way it foregrounds the means of narrativity by its repetitions and interruptions, this metanarrativity attains another meaning from the perspective of trauma narration. Ballade represents an attempt to overcome a painful experience by turning it into a narrative. Both Ballade's repetitions and its increased linearity could be interpreted to represent the protagonist's attempt to overcome a traumatic event. The now-moment of the lyrics could be said to be the actual site of trauma, as trauma consists of an inherent belatedness in relation to the experience itself. The narrativizing process is demonstrated in how Ballade's music becomes at a general level less fragmentary and more linear over time. It manifests also in an intertextual level, as the suffering is represented as less acute in Ballade than in *Douleur*. Ballade depicts a private account of guilt, suffering and attempt at survival, and the musical means by which this story is transmitted are manyfold and contemporary. Ballade demonstrates that music can create a nuanced narrative by alluding to emotions and psychological states. With its representation of a recurring memory and allusions to a historical topic and genre, Ballade exemplifies the way music can bring the past to the present.

Douleur and Ballade could be interpreted to already foresee Saariaho's opera A*driana Mater*, which is equally a story of trauma. A further research question this raises is whether one could even speak of a particular "trauma music" or "music of suffering" within Saariaho's *oeuvre*. As there are several versions of *Quatre Instants*, their differences could be studied in more detail. Ballade's harmonic language, texturing, pedal use and form remind of Debussy's piano works, and their relationship would be interesting to study further.

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